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SOCCER WEEKLY

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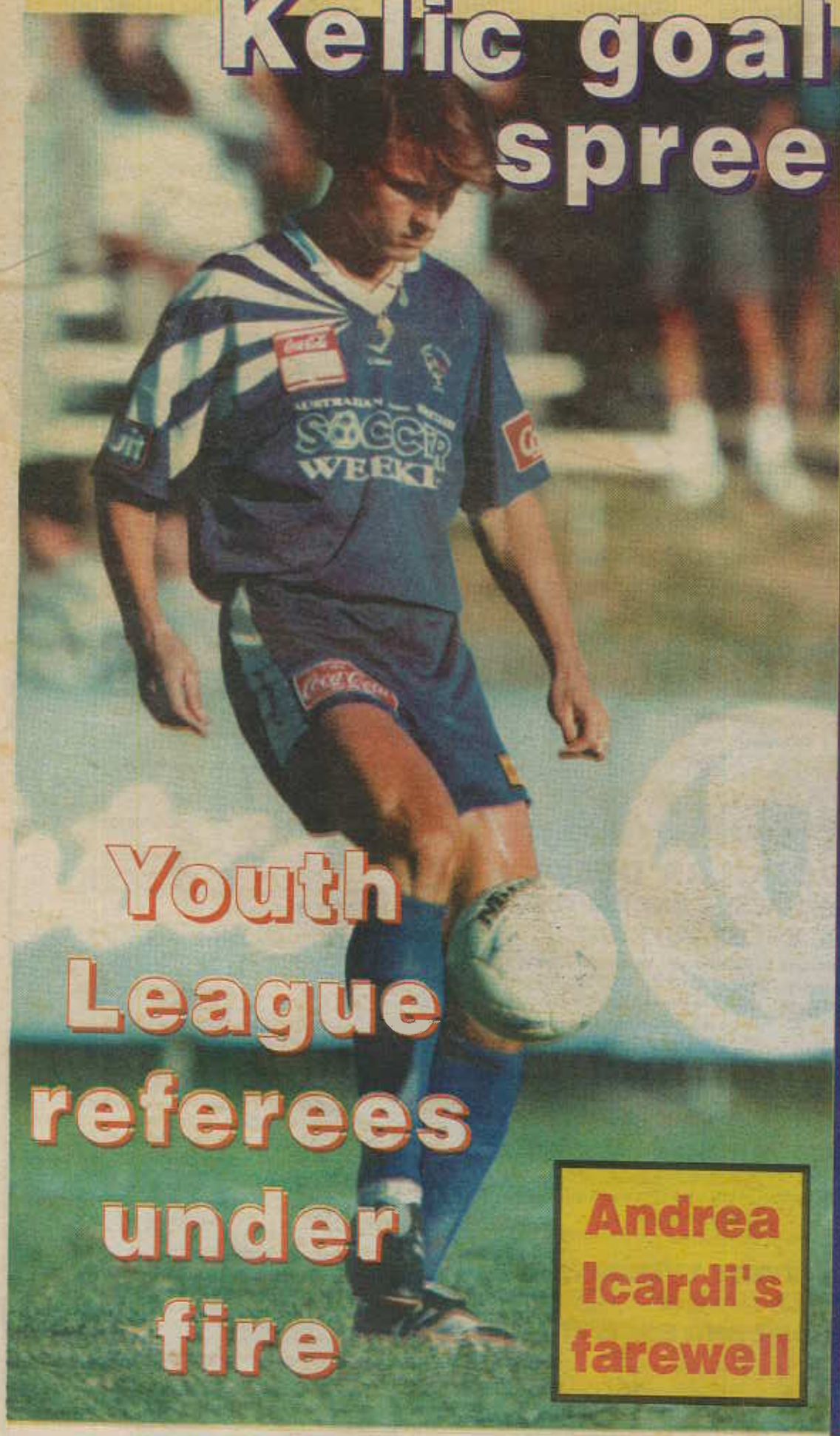

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– THE EDITOR

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Spink's bust-up

BY ALFRED HIATT

TROUBLED striker Warren Spink launched a scathing attack at Jim Foley for putting personalities before the good of the team.

Spink believes the Newcastle Breakers coach falsely branded him a troublemaker before the club's board in order to get the CCSL's second leading goalscorer transfer-listed.

Spink said: "It is purely and simply a personality clash with Jim Foley.

"He said I was a big problem, and that I was causing trouble in the team. That is what really disappointed me, because he has let a personal thing get in the way.

"Jimmy Foley has done this totally off his own bat. He thinks his way is indisputable, but the results just don't support that."

However, Foley defended himself against Spink's claims, saying the former Socceroo had failed to fulfil aspects of his contractual agreements.

Foley argued: "It is in the long-term interests of the club for Warren to go on the transfer list.

"Warren Spink's prowess as a striker is not in question. That being the case, the club would be pretty stupid to take the action they are taking if there weren't some aspects of his contract not being fulfilled."

Spink's contractual obligations as a development officer are currently under scrutiny. Foley admitted he had clashed with Spink, but denied he had any problem putting personalities to one side. Foley said: "Warren has seen me as the prime mover in bringing this situation to a head.

"He has gone out of his way to show his resentment towards me, and that undermines my authority with the rest of the team.

"But I would still work with him, even though he is not a character who is high on my friendship list."

Spink, who said player unrest was rife within the club, slammed Foley's management of the Breakers.

The ex-Preston star insisted: "We are in a horrible slump at the moment, but we're not changing anything.

"Recently we've been lucky to train twice a week, and you simply have to train more than once a week at this level.

"As a senior player I've got to speak out. A lot of the guys have been coming to me and Darren Stewart with problems. I am a player who will express my opinion to Jim personally, but you can ask any player in the team whether I have been causing trouble."

According to Spink, his differences with Foley came to a head before Newcastle's clash with South Melbourne last Wednesday.

Spink, who scored from the penalty spot in the 4-1 loss, said: "Two days before the game I was told I would be playing in the youth team for the rest of the year. Then I was told I was in the first team.

"I am a professional footballer, and if I have to move, I'll move.

"The problem at the moment is not just that we are losing, but that we are losing by three, or four-goal margins. The results are terrible, but the team is a lot better than its position on the table suggests."

Heading for a showdown: Warren Spink in action for the Socceroos.

ICARDI'S ITALIAN JOB

BY ANTHONY RAINERI

Andrea Icardi, the remaining half of Marconi-Fairfield's controversial Italian connection, has played his last game for the Coca Cola Soccer League champions.

Icardi said he would return to Italy next month along with his teammate Ermanno Pelucchi, who quit Marconi a couple of weeks ago because of a prolonged feud with coach Frank Arok.

The problem with Icardi is that his previous club, former Serie A champions Verona, now want a transfer fee for the 30-year-old, who came to Marconi at the start of the season on a free transfer.

Icardi said with the season more than half complete, Marconi were unable and perhaps unwilling to fork out the necessary sum of money, which has not been disclosed.

"The Marconi officials and I have decided that it is better for everybody concerned that I finish my relationship with the club," Icardi said.

"I'm disappointed because I would have liked to continue playing for Marconi."

The defensive midfielder denied the parting of company had anything to do with Pelucchi leaving the club.

Icardi last played for Marconi in their 2-0 loss to Sydney United on January 9.

Since then he has been recovering from chicken pox and was not expected to regain full fitness for another couple of weeks.

Icardi is well-known in Italy having played over 200 games for such high-profile clubs as AC Milan, Atalanta, Lazio and Verona.

Leaving: Andrea Icardi is heading back to Italy.

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Thomson to name Olympic Squad

BY ANTHONY RAINERI

EDDIE Thomson will this week name a 26-man train-on squad for the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games.

Although the qualifiers are still more than 12 months away, Thomson said it was imperative that the preparation starts now.

"On February 14, we will spend a week in camp at the Australian Institute of Sport where we will check the players," Thomson said.

"We will also play matches against visiting Japanese teams on February 16 and 17."

Thomson plans to include several European-based players in the squad, including former Young Socceroos Craig Moore and Paul Agostino.

These players will join the squad during a three-week tour of Europe in August.

Thomson said he hadn't yet decided on an Olyroo captain, but revealed that the contenders included Sydney United skipper Tony Popovic and South Melbourne defender Kevin Muscat.

Meanwhile, Thomson said he was confident the Socceroos would be back in action in May or June despite not yet signing any opponents.

"It's not easy," Thomson said. "The World Cup qualifiers are not interested because we are too far away.

"The countries which didn't make the World Cup want a break and some haven't even appointed coaches."

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Katholos sparks refereeing debate

BY SARAH CLARRY

Recent events in the Coca-Cola Soccer League and the National Youth League have shrouded the issue of refereeing in controversy.

Granted, referees have always been a vilified breed. It is the kind of thankless task that goes largely unnoticed when it is being done properly, but raises squeals of dissatisfaction when it isn't. But while the subject of refereeing will always be contentious in all areas of the game, it has reached new levels of controversy in the NYL, where several recent incidents have brought things to a head.

The current system of filing a complaint, or indeed, any type of opinion on refereeing performance, means a coach, official or player can either a) write a letter or b) make a phone call to the Australian Soccer Federation.

But it is this behind-closed-doors system that has come under fire from several coaches of both grades, and many players.

Gary Power, who is employed by the ASF to administer the referees, says this structure exists to present a united front to the media and sporting world at large, rather than show fighting within Australian soccer's ranks.

Sydney Olympic youth team coach Peter Katholos is one who has refused to hold back in his condemnation of the current system, and as a result is facing disciplinary action from the ASF.

But Katholos is unrepentant. He says the current structure doesn't allow those with a grievance a fair hearing.

He claims poor refereeing has cost his team several games this season.

This is an attitude that one would usually expect from the coach of a side accustomed to losing, but on the contrary, Olympic are sitting just behind leaders Sydney United on the Youth League table and have put in some of the most effective and entertaining performances in the league this season.

However, he claims his complaints, though acknowledged, have gone largely ignored.

Katholos is staking a lot, both professionally and personally, on his stand on this issue.

Character and authority are the attributes that he claims are missing from the referees adjudicating the youth matches.

"I'm trying to teach the kids discipline and character, but it's difficult when they cannot respect the person in the middle," he said.

Power says: "The NYL is a training ground for referees, as it is for players."

Youth League leaders

Peter Katholos

Sydney United are coached by Lee Sterrey, another coach known to be quite forthright when voicing his opinions on issues such as these. He vehemently disagrees with this "training" mentality and says the Youth League deserves much better. "Why don't they train these referees in the Umbro Under 17's League?" Strerrey asked.

"I know of competent NSW State League referees, like Alex Spirovski for example, who would be better qualified for these matches."

However, Sterrey is a little more tolerant.

"You don't drop a player after one bad performance," he concedes. "The referees deserve the same opportunity. But it's always a problem that referees who consistently perform badly don't seem to be punished." According to Power, more has been done this season than ever before to ensure a good refereeing standard is attained.

"We have doubled the amount of training referees do. They are weighed and given a fitness test monthly, so that they are forced to maintain a certain level," he said.

within a game. We later put this together and send it out to all referees nationally. We have done one of these already and another is nearly completed."

Power says these measures have been extremely effective but admits there is still more that could be done, to alleviate what he describes as a "seige mentality" between referees and club representatives.

"Pre-season, I'm in favour of, firstly, coaches, club captains and referees attending a seminar and having the opportunity to talk. Secondly, to send a referee to pre-season training to explain the law changes and answer any questions rather than just trying to teach it on the field once the season is underway."

Sterrey agrees: "I'd be happy to attend regular meetings say, two or three times a season, to either say my piece or just listen to what the others have to say."

Sterrey can see the improvements, but says they still have a way to go.

"My team are not a dirty team and they are leading the competition by six points. But we still have 37 yellow cards for the season."

He also thinks the current referees are too willing to pull up the games. "I still think the best referee is the one you hardly see or hear from."

It's not likely to be an issue that ever sees all sides happy.

Power says: "Unfortunately there are three types of coaches. Firstly, the ones who will always use the proper channels and these are the ones that will get a good hearing.

"Then you get the coach who has had a frustrating day and just explodes.

"Finally there are the deliberate manipulators, who use the media to draw criticisms away from themselves when their team is performing poorly. They use them as a lever to exert pressure on the Federation."

Says Power: "It's not often the referees miss an open goal."

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Turmoil at Breakers

BY RICHARD FRENCH

THE Coca Cola Soccer League future of the Newcastle Breakers should be decided this week after the club's annual general meeting last Sunday and what was expected to be a lengthy board meeting last night.

With the Breakers winless for a month, midfielder Nick Meredith departed for Marconi, coach Jim Foley and star striker Warren Spink in dispute, Foley also lost veteran Lawrie McKinna last week.

Rumours were flying thick and fast after last Friday night's 1-1 draw with Melbourne BUSC, with everything from the resignation or sacking of Foley to the club itself folding being suggested.

But rumours aside, the future of the club may be in the hands of new general manager Pat Clarke, and a rescue package which could involve help from the Northern NSW Soccer Federation.

Left with a debt of $2 million from its first two years in the competition, which provided the club with one of the finest facilities in the league and former coach Bruce Stowell with some of the CCSL's best players, the Breakers got back to basics with a local team as they struggled to meet their creditors' demands.

After a flying start to the season the Breakers' lack of depth, poor organisation at the back and confused style has seen them plummet towards the bottom.

Meredith left after several weeks of fighting with Foley over being dropped because of bookings and due to the player's concern over the club's future.

McKinna was upset at not being picked for a recent trip to Melbourne.

Spink denied the charge that he has failed to meet his off-field development officer commitments because nothing has been organised for him and he is critical of Foley's coaching methods.

With the situation changing by the minute, as ABSW went to press it seems likely to take until next week for the smoke to clear and something like the truth to emerge from the rumour mongering and finger pointing.

But one thing is certain: in the words of the maestro Frank Arok himself, there will be no truly Australian National League without Newcastle.

Amid all the doom and gloom in the past few weeks, one ray of sunshine emerged last week when the Breakers reported they were close to signing young goalkeeper Craig Carter.

Coach Jim Foley said last Friday night that Carter's current club, Blacktown City, had agreed in principle to a deal and only some minor details remained to be worked out.

The giant Carter is a Hunter Valley born-and-bred player who made his First Division debut in the North for Maitland when only 14.

Since then he has had stints with Newcastle Austral in the State League and several Sydney clubs, where he has picked up a number of championship medals.

Barely into his twenties, Carter's ability will not a lot of pressure on veteran New Zealand international, and adopted son of Newcastle, Clint Gosling.

Gosling hasn't been receiving much support at the back lately and has shown signs of hesitance.

But knowing the Goose's determination to stay on top, Carter's arrival should help him left his game and produce a great battle for the number 1 shirt.

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Arok to defend Australia's credibility against Korean champions.

BY JOHN ECONOMOS.

FRANK AROK, coach of the current Australian champions Marconi, never for one moment thought that after seven years he would once again lock horns with an old international enemy from South Korea.

But that is exactly what is going to happen on Wednesday week (February 9th) when Arok's star-studded Marconi side clashes with the champions of South Korea, Il Haw.

Il Haw is currently coached by Mr Jong Han Park, the former national coach of South Korea, who first did battle with Arok back in 1987 in Seoul.

Park was in charge of the national South Korean side that clashed with Australia, coached by Arok, in the final of the South Korean President's Cup played in Seoul.

And on that memorable night, in the packed stadium, the Koreans had to rely on a penalty shootout to beat Arok's Socceroos for the Cup, despite some great saves by Australia's goalkeeper, Jeff Olver.

Now seven years later, Arok and Park will meet again.

But Arok is seeking revenge for that loss to Park back in 1987. Marconi clashes with Il Haw at the Marconi Stadium next week in the first leg of the 'Australian-South Korean Champions' Cup'

Arok stated: "Besides being very proud and honoured for my club Marconi to be representing Australia as club champions against South Korea's club champions, we will be treating this first leg very, very seriously.

"We must prove to everyone in Asia that Australian clubs are at least equal to anything they have over there, and that we are not a backward country when it comes to club football.

"We must prove that we have a definite right to be in the big league in Asia at both club and national levels.

"Over recent years, our national sides have never been able to beat the Koreans over there. Now we have another chance to do so.

"Il Haw are a very professional and tough outfit.

"One of their stars is their former Russian international goalkeeper, Valeri Saritchev.

"This Korean side will include five current World Cup players who will represent their country in June in the USA World Cup finals.

"But regardless of Marconi's current position on the ladder, we will take this game very seriously for the sake of the future in Asia of all Australian teams," Arok warned.

Korean Television, KBS, will beam this match live back to Korea in prime time and this is the only reason why the kick-off has been set down for such an early start at 6pm.

The second leg of the home and away "Champions' Cup Final" will be played in Seoul mid-May at the Dong Daemoon Stadium.

In the event of the scores being level, the 'away-goals rule' will apply. Should the two sides still remain level, then the Cup will be settled by a penalty shootout.

One of the official sponsors of this Cup is Korean Airlines.

Sydney's large Korean community has snapped up all the tickets allocated to them.

Prior to the kick-off, a special demonstration of Tae Kwon Do martial arts will entertain the expected huge crowd

The organiser of this international Club Champions' Cup is Mr Casey Chang.

Mr Chang is now working with the Japan F.A. for this year's "J" League champions to be included in the next Cup.

Australia's immediate future at club and international levels obviously lies in Asia.

So it can easily be seen just how important the pioneering of this Club Champions' Cup really is.

Marconi's Board of Directors has given this Cup its utmost support and is keenly looking forward to Marconi's full and further involvement in international soccer.

The Korean squad of 31 players plus nine officials arrived in Australia last week and are based at Parklea's soccer complex.

The tourists were special guests of Club Marconi last Saturday night.

The Koreans first watched Marconi thrash Sydney Olympic and then were wined and dined in Marconi's lavish social club.

Frank Arok: seeking revenge for Australia.

AUSTRALIAN - KOREAN CHAMPIONS' CUP

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LES SCHEINFLUG
"I'M ALWAYS LOOKING FOR BETTER PLAYERS"

BY ANTHONY RAINERI

WORK is already well underway in preparing the Joeys and Young Socceroos for the qualifying stages of their respective World Championships next year.

The Under 17 and Under 20 World Championships are held every two years compared with every four years for the World Cup.

Train-on squads for both age groups have long been in place and the Young Socceroos have already gone on a tour to South America.

In charge of both teams again is the indefatigable Les Scheinflug, who now must surely be one of the world's most experienced and successful coaches at youth level.

Always the perfectionist, Scheinflug will spend as much time as he can this year scouring the whole country looking for talented youngsters who are better than the players in his train-on squads.

"I'm always looking for better players," Scheinflug said last Thursday. "I hope to be holding special training camps in each State where young players are welcome to try out.

"I'm sure we will detect some players to invite to the Australian squads."

Australia is one of the top footballing nations at youth level.

The Joeys have qualified for every World Championship, while the Young Socceroos have missed out only once — in 1989.

Australia is ranked fifth at Under 20 level and sixth in the Under 17 age group.

In the World Championships last year, the Young Socceroos reached the semi-finals while the Joeys bowed out in the quarter-finals, losing to the eventual champions and runners-up — Nigeria and Ghana.

Talent spotter: Les Scheinflug.

The next World Youth Championship will be held in Nigeria in March, 1995, and the Under 17 competition will take place in Ecuador five months later.

The Joeys have just finished a training camp at the AIS and Scheinflug plans three more this year, plus an overseas tour before the start of the qualifiers.

The Young Socceroos next go into camp in March and then again in June when Scheinflug hopes to take the squad on a three-week tour of Europe.

'Hope' is the appropriate word because the money for this tour still has to be found.

"It is of great importance Australia does not rest on past performances," Scheinflug said.

"They have been extraordinary performances but it will get harder and harder in the future.

"We have to keep experiencing overseas competition.

"But we are identifying talent better than before and we are working with the players much more."

Scheinflug also pleaded with Coca-Cola Soccer League coaches to give youngsters a better run.

"In the World Youth Championships in Australia last year, we played against some of the best countries in the world," he said. "Yet only a few players from my team are consistently playing first grade.

"Portugal won the competition in1991 and they now have eight players in the national team.

"Our coaches must have more belief in their young players."

Young gun: Brisbane's Sean Cranney in action for the Young Socceroos.

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"Building towards National Soccer League status once again, and aiming towards Youth League participation in 1995."

Olympic star Zlatko Papec returns

BY ROY HAY

TRAVELLING with the Hajduk Split Under 16 team, which recently toured Australia, was a man who had been here before. Zlatko Papec played in the final of the Olympic Games Soccer Tournament at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in December 1956 before the biggest crowd ever to watch a soccer game in Australia, around 102,000 people. In those days there was no Croatian national team and so like many of his countrymen Papec turned out for Yugoslavia.

Russia won the match by a single goal scored by Ilyin, but Papec had the ball in the net with only 10 minutes to play, only to be ruled offside, something he disputes to this day. Alex Barr of The Age wrote: "Yugoslavia replied soon after, netting well from the inside the area, but a peculiar decision disallowed the goal." Bill Fleming of The Argus noted: "The crowd roared when Papec sent a pile-driver past the Russian goalie, but referee Ron Wright, Australia, rightly ruled offside."

Zlatko Papec.

So Papec had to be content with the silver medal, of which he is still very proud. Papec also played in the World Cup in 1954 in Switzerland where Yugoslavia was defeated by two goals to nil in the quarter-finals by the eventual winner West Germany. Papec remembers the Olympic Final as the highlight of his career, and recently he revisited the MCG and Olympic Park and marvelled at how Melbourne had changed since 1956. He did not get much chance to see the rest of Melbourne, far less Australia, on that tour, so he made up for it in 1994.

Now 60 years old, but still very fit and active, Papec is a youth scout and selector with Hajduk Split. The current Hajduk team, which beat Melbourne Knights 2-0 within hours of arriving on a delayed flight from Singapore via Brisbane, was chosen before Papec rejoined the selection committee at his old club. The Under 16s, who have seven players in the Croatian National Under 16 squad, also beat North Geelong by three goals to nil.

Members of Hajduk Split's Under 16 team

THE OFFSIDE WITH DARREN ALLY

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

COMPILED BY STEPHEN COPPING

It is purely and simply a personality clash with Jim Foley - Warren Spink on Newcastle's coach, Jim Foley, who seems to be running out of personalties to have clashes with.

He thinks his way is indisputable, but the results just don't support that - Spink on Foley's coaching methods and results.

He has gone out of his way to show his resentment towards me, and that undermines my authority with the rest of the team - Foley on what he sees as the problem at Newcastle: Warren Spink.

I am a professional footballer, and if I have to move, I'll move - Spink on his future.

It's not often the referees miss an open goal - The ASF's National Director of Coaching, Gary Power, on the whimpering coaches he says he has to deal with.

We can't have people refereeing a game that have no character or authority. We need people who are respected - Sydney Olympic Youth League coach Peter Katholos on the current referees in the NYL.

We try to make some constructive criticisms, and all they do is call you up to be disciplined - Katholos is now set to be charged by the ASF for bringing the game into disrepute after questioning the men in black in a recent article in ABSW.

I have my heart set on gaining a place in the Olympic Games team - Sydney Olympic midfielder Peter Tsekenis quashes the rumours linking him to Greek club PAOK of Salonika and indicates what will be his next international venture.

Our coaches must have more belief in their young players - Young Socceroo supremo Les Scheinflug is still urging CCSL coaches to introduce more youngsters to first grade football.

I had to put up with him for the last two seasons and enough was enough. I sent him away to catch mosquitoes. There wasn't anything more I could do for him - Adelaide City coach Zoran Matic on Steve Maxwell, who returned to the first team last week after months in the bush trying to score mosquitoes.

He treated all players equal. He spoke to Brendan Renaud as if he were a first team regular, and no-one told him that you are not to tackle Marshall Soper from behind - Parramatta Eagles veteran Gerry Gomez on how new signing Cyrille Ndongo Keller has settled in at Melita Stadium.

When I heard about Rodrigues, I told the coach I would leave if he planned to use me from the bench - Socceroo and Borussia Dortmund star Ned Zelic on his side's new signing from Atalanta, Luis Rodrigues.

The chances of seeing my contract out with Dortmund are 40-60 at best - Zelic's future at Dortmund has been thrown into jeopardy, however, a move to Torino is unlikely.

It's a big task, about the biggest task I've faced. Everyone's feeling very low in the game at the moment and I think it's about time we tried to put some fun back. The only way we will enjoy it is if we win games and that's got to be my priority - New England coach Terry Venables signs on the dotted line at Lancaster Gate (England's football headquarters) until 1996, but the British tabloids will give him until March 9, 1994 (Venable's first match in charge of England against Denmark) when the chopping block may become necessary.

Letters to the Editor

Tell us what you think about soccer's big issues. Letters should ideally be a maximum of 200 words, and may be edited.

The Editor,
AUSTRALIAN & BRITISH SOCCER WEEKLY
P.O. BOX 155
Marrickville,
NSW 2204

ADIDAS APOLOGISE

I wish to respond to Michael Kmet's letter to your publication (ABSW 11/1/94) regarding Adidas' delivery of the Australian Socceroo shirts.

Let me begin by saying that Adidas and its Marketing Department are very disappointed about not delivering all orders before Christmas. We would like to apologise to Mr Kmet and to other people who did not receive the shirts.

Although, as Mr Kmet emphatically stated, "any excuse can be made", the reason for the delay was a faulty delivery of fabric. Adidas was not prepared to deliver a product, representing the pinnacle of Australian Soccer, that was sub-standard. Indeed all Adidas footwear and clothing is subject to the same philosophy.

As Ray Baartz (the retailer where Mr Kmet purchased the Australian shirt) and other retailers will testify, Adidas' delivery record is second to none in the Australian sporting goods industry.

On the positive side, another contributing factor to the delivery problem is in fact the huge demand for the Australian Soccer merchandise produced by Adidas. Thousands of Australians are now wanting to wear the Australian soccer shirt, since the recent World Cup campaign.

Adidas is currently doing all in its power to avoid any similar incidents occurring in 1994.

Rob Mills
National Product Manager, Clothing
Adidas.

A MARKETING PLAN IS NEEDED

I am concerned to hear that the ASF plans to cut the number of teams in the CCSL.

Although it may be a good suggestion, it will not bring more spectators to the game. Last week a reader suggested that the Eagles and Sydney United be omitted from the CCSL.

I believe that this decision would severely hamper the progress of the CCSL's popularity. The reason for this is that, if teams are omitted, spectators are more likely to stop going to the soccer altogether, than support a different club. This brings me to the point that the CCSL should retain 14 clubs, so that new spectators have a variety of clubs from which to choose.

But if it becomes absolutely necessary for the number of the clubs in the CCSL to be reduced then the ASF must take into consideration the effect of omitting a particular club, due to the amount of supporters it has and also the way the club has been performing in the CCSL.

Overall, I truly believe that omitting clubs from the CCSL will do more damage than good. My few suggestions for improving the popularity of soccer are as follows:

Parramatta Eagles' Gerry Gomez

(1) Increase the standard of soccer by increasing the rewards for players and clubs with more finance plus overseas players. While the players remain part time, the CCSL cannot improve quickly.

(2) Advertisings soccer on billboards, commercials (not only SBS) etc. A good start would be to advertise CCSL results on the news of all channels so that TV audiences are aware that soccer exists, beyond the Socceroos. This can in turn bring interest into the CCSL. An example of effective advertising is basketball and how it has boomed in popularity.

Female supporter
Mulgrave. Vic.

PROUD EAGLE

I am referring to your letter, "Eagles and Crows should go". I am very disappointed about the writer and about the absence of his name. Is he scared to show it? I am not, I am a Parramatta Eagles supporter and I been following Parramatta Eagles for the last 20 years. Maybe he is a Sydney Olympic supporter or a Marconi supporter.

At least we have a home ground to go to, not like Olympic, who have been playing for the last 30 years and are still moving from one ground to another. As for Marshall Soper, if he doesn't play we still go to see the Eagles in action. I say one thing to you or to the ASF: if we go, don't think for a minute that we are going to support Olympic or Marconi.

I hope next time you reveal your name and do not hide behind the curtain. We are proud of our team, Parramatta Eagles, and our ground where this year we spent $125,000 on floodlights. As for the Crows they also have a beautiful ground to go to.

At least we took some pride when we won the NSL Cup twice in three years and we are ranked the 89th best club in the world.

We have always been behind our team and we always will be. And we'll always be proud of them.

Joe Rapa,
NSW

INCONSISTENT REFS

Having played and followed soccer for the last 40 odd years I was surprised at the poor standard of refereeing displayed by Mr Lorenc on 15.1.94, Morwell Falcons v Sydney Olympic.

I wish to mention that not all refereeing is poor, in fact some refereeing is very good, but in general it is inconsistent.

When Morwell Falcons' Lachlan Armstrong was most definitely fouled in the penalty area, which should have resulted in a penalty, Mr Lorenc waved play on as he had already awarded a penalty to the Falcons earlier in the game. This, besides other decisions, probably robbed Falcons of three points.

I wonder if referees could be given demerit points for poor refereeing and fined money or demoted for some games on the same lines as the yellow and red card system for players. As all games are video-taped a panel of judges should view all games and either hand out demerit points for poor refereeing or allocate bonus points for good refereeing. Whatever, referees should be more accountable for their performances.

The CCSL, as the highest league in the country, will not reach its potential if the standard of refereeing is not improved, and improved quickly.

H.A. Richter
Morwell

AUSTRALIA IN BRIEF...

BY STEPHEN COPPING

◆Refereeing controversies are raging in the National Youth League at the moment. The latest, in which Sydney Olympic youth coach Peter Katholos is charged by the Australian Soccer Federation with bringing the game into disrepute, is another example of how the ASF has allowed this problem to fester. Gary Power has stressed that there is an avenue for coaches to go to if they feel aggrieved, however, just because Katholos says what a lot of people actually think, it does not mean he is bringing the game into disrepute. The problem is not going to go away, and media debate would have enlivened the dispute.

◆The lack of coverage the South Korean champion team Il Haw has received for its proposed visit next week is quite alarming. Nothing on radio, newspapers or television has been heard so far. As this could be the prelude of a future annual Asian Cup it is disappointing the ASF has not been flooding the mass media with information about the game between Il Haw and Marconi. (See page five for all the details.)

◆Brisbane, currently enjoying a resurgence on and off the park, are all set to host the World Masters Games from September 26 to October 8. The World Masters Games is open to mature-aged athletes from all sporting backgrounds and covers 30 different sports. Hundreds of soccer players will travel to Brisbane and the competition is open to men over 35. Perry Park will host soccer games during the two-week event.

◆On a totally different age-scale the American Airlines Dallas Cup XV kicks off on March 27 in Dallas. The Under 19 boys' teams playing in the Super Group will compete for the Under 19 World Club Championship, which is an invitational competition encompassing 16 of the world's premier clubs. Teams selected already are Real Madrid, AC Milan, Tottenham Hotspur, Club Brugge and Glasgow Celtic.

◆According to Guy Marocchi, coach of Western Australia, ex-Marconi-Fairfield midfielder Fabio Macolino will not be playing in the Singapore league this season. Macolino has joined Floreat Athena in Western Australia and not Perth, as originally revealed in Australian and British Soccer Weekly.

◆On the subject of Western Australia, Gary Marocchi has knocked those who have recently attacked the state for playing in the Singapore League this season as a backward step. Marocchi said the chances of the state actually getting admitted into the Coca Cola Soccer League were so remote that they more-or-less had no other option if they wanted to play in a higher-standard league.

◆It was interesting to read reports emanating from England that the Premiership clubs could revert to the 1 to 11 numbering system next season. Many clubs, officials, and fans have criticised this season's players' numbers because of the confusion they have caused. At one game in England recently three players lined up wearing the numbers 34, 35 and 36. The Australian Soccer Federation should take note.

◆On a more positive note, last weekend's total crowd attendance saw a five thousand increase on the corresponding Round 18 fixture in 1992/93.

Almost 9000 spectators witnessed Marconi's 7-1 victory over Sydney Olympic - great stuff!

Young Eagles reach new heights

Melita Eagles Soccer Club

ROUND 18
PARRAMATTA EAGLES 3
WEST ADELAIDE 2
By Sarah Clarry
at Melita Stadium

While Parramatta's experienced campaigners like Marshall Soper and Gerry Gomez are fully deserving of their accolades, it was a young Parramatta Eagles side that buried West Adelaide on Sunday.

Glen Gwynne, Joe Spiteri and Brendan Renaud are all young players that have already received recognition and Renaud showed why coach Rale Rasic has put his faith in him.

His 57th minute goal was brilliant.

Spiteri laid the ball off for Adam Ciantar, another one of Parramatta's promising young players, then Ciantar sent in a perfectly placed cross.

Renaud showed exceptional strength on the ball, a feature of his game, to fend off his player and hit home Parramatta's winner.

It is only his second full match with the first team this season, and the 20-year-old said he's now aiming to maintain a first-team spot and "keep his feet on the ground".

"I had a lot of knockbacks when I was younger and it has just made me work harder."

Renaud was man-of-the-match in his first full game with the first team against Wollongong last week, but was in doubt for West Adelaide because of a hip injury.

But it didn't appear to slow him down and he and Spiteri were instrumental in the team's win.

It was a Spiteri shot in the opening ten minutes that took an unfortunate deflection off West Adelaide's Greg Mills and caught the inside of the post to put Parramatta ahead.

But the visitors replied just three minutes later with a free kick from Greg Brown.

Brown cleared the wall and 'keeper Peter Gunning merely stood and watched it go in.

Gus Cerro and Stan Lazaridis then combined towards the end of the first half to give West Adelaide the lead.

Cerro released Lazaridis on the left and he outpaced Ciantar and struck his shot well from just outside the penalty area.

But the second stanza was barely underway when Spiteri got on the end of a great cross from Soper to equalise and ten minutes later Renaud bagged the winner.

West Adelaide coach Raul Blanco was tempted to replace 'keeper Peter Blazincic when his shoulder popped out but it righted itself and Blazincic insisted on playing on, though he later required strapping.

The Sharks had an incredible last ditch attempt denied. When Brown attempted an overhead kick, the ball hit Parramatta's Nick Orlic, rebounded off the inside of the right post, and was cleared.

Blanco was philosophical about the result, saying: "It was a good team effort and it's a shame to go home empty handed. But we have to blame ourselves for not creating enough chances."

The Sharks will need to improve their finishing, an area Blanco concedes has been a problem for them throughout the season, when they face Adelaide City in the derby match this weekend.

PARRAMATTA EAGLES: Gunning, Ciantar, Gwynne, Gomez (Mendez ht), Koch, Orlic, Moffitt, Naumovski, Soper, Spiteri, Renaud.

WEST ADELAIDE; Blazincic, Vatsilas, Kokkinopolitis, Hooker, Slifkas, Cardozo, Cerro, Lazaridis, Blair (Brazzale 75), Brown, Mills.

SCORERS: Mills 8m og, Spiteri 47m, Renaud 57m for Parramatta. Brown 11m, Lazaridis 42m for Adelaide.

YELLOW CARDS: Spiteri 34m, Mendez 86 for Parramatta. Blair 46m, Brown 77m, Cerro 91m for Adelaide.

REFEREE: G Connolly.

POY: Renaud 3, Spiteri 2, Lazaridis 1.

Talent: Joe Spiteri

Midfield influence: Ljubco Naumovski on the charge.

CCSL LINE-UPS LEADING SCORERS & TABLE

SOUTH MELB 1
MORWELL 0
MORWELL: Mautone, Upton, Canosa, Douglas, Parton, Donnelly, Sevin, Mrkovski, Armstrong, Trpcevski (Waddell 80), Djordjevic.
SOUTH MELBOURNE: Anastasiadis, Muscat, Hasler, Durakovic, Polak, Wade, Tasios (Tsolakis 70), Trimboli (Stubbins 81), Awaritefe, Valkanis, Goutzioulis.
GOALS: Awaritefe 26m for Sth Melb.
YELLOW CARDS: Donnelly 27m and Upton 29m for Morwell, Awaritefe 7m and Goutzioulis 40m for Sth Melbourne.
RED CARD: Nil.
REFEREE: Gordon Dunster.
CROWD: 8256.

MARCONI 7
SYDNEY OLYMPIC 1
MARCONI-FAIRFIELD: Schwarzer, Jolevski, De marigny, Bingley, Gray, Kuleski (Johnson 82), Van Egmond, Taliadoros (Iocca 79), Corica, Harper, Talay.
SYDNEY OLYMPIC: Gibson, Barrett, Petratos, Sorras, Tsekenis, Maloney, Milosevic (Lee 45), Kelic, Trajanovski, saad (Tome 45), Mendes.
YELLOW CARDS: Taliadoros (76) for Marconi.
RED CARDS: Petraos (90) for Olympic.
SCORERS: Harper (11, 90), Gray (17), Van Egmond (27), Taliadoros (40), Bingley (47), Iocca (89) for Marconi. Kelic (65) for Olympic.
CROWD: 8,978.
REFEREE: Richard Lorenc
POY POINTS: 3 — Corica, 2 — Bingley, 1 — Gibson.

NEWCASTLE 1
BUSC 1
NEWCASTLE: Gosling, Maier, Roberts, Stewart, Jones, Jennings, Brown, Spink, Lowe (Naumov half-time, Owens, Tredinnick (Halpin 70).
BUSC: Courtis, Kuzmanovic, Della Rocca, Cahut, McGeachy (Mazzini 72), Aloisi, Zinni, Emmanuele, Karkaletsis, Tobolato, Pillemer (Tricarico half-time).
SCORERS: Spink 26, Zinni 85.
YELLOW CARDS: Roberts 21, Tombolato 43.
REFEREE: N. Jones.
CROWD: 2,227.
POY POINTS: 3 — Zinni, 2 Tombolato, 1 — Naumov.

ADELAIDE CITY 0
WOLLONGONG 0
ADELAIDE CITY: Petkovic, Vidmar, Ivanovic, Tobin, Mori, Veart, Maxwell (Reda ht), Lozanovski, Melta, Mullen (Talladira 82), Hassell.
WOLLONGONG CITY: Hughes, O'Shea, Horsley, Lloyd, Ollerenshaw, Coveny, Bonetig (McFadden 82), McLaren, Ricoy, Forshaw, Ackers.
SCORERS: Nil.
YELLOW CARDS: O'Shea 16m for Wollongong.
REFEREE: J Fraser.
CROWD: 3,652.
POY POINTS: 3 — Ivanovic, 2 — Ricoy, 1 — Mori.

HEIDELBERG UTD 0
BRISBANE 1
HEIDELBERG UTD: Chatzitrifonas, Iossifidis, Watson, Selemidis, Scott, MacNicol, Georgiadis, Vlahos (Varsos 76), Tiktikakis, Gnjidic, Michalakopoulos.
BRISBANE STRIKERS: Bolton, Pimblett, Hunter, Jackson, Phillips, Stowell, Wright, T Cranney, Slater, S Cranney, Ditton (Williams 75).
SCORERS: Wright 61m for Brisbane.
YELLOW CARDS: Scott 60m, Selemidis 70m for Heidelberg.
REFEREE: C Naumcevski.
CROWD: 1,000.
POY POINTS: 3 — S Cranney, 2 — T Cranney, 1 — Georgiadis.

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 6
SYDNEY UNITED 1
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS: Miller, De Amicis, Horvat, Vanis, Marth, Trajcevski (Markovski 74), Biskic, Viduka, A Cervinski, Pondeljak (Vojtek 63), D Cervinski.
SYDNEY UNITED: Franken, Stanton, Kupresak, Popovic, Krslovic, Hristdoulou, Gibson, Zdrillic, Moric (Milicic 58), Okon, Jermen (Lamond ht).
SCORERS: Marth 13m, Pondeljak 29m, A Cervinski 40m, 77m, Viduka 44m and 79m for Melbourne Knights. Krslovic 69m for Sydney.
YELLOW CARDS: Krslovic 63m, Popovic 75m for Sydney.
REFEREE: P Spiers.
CROWD: 4,000.
POY POINTS: 3 — Marth, 2 — A Cervinski, 1 — Pondeljak.

PARRAMATTA 3
WEST ADELAIDE 2
PARRAMATTA EAGLES: Gunning, Ciantar, Gwynne, Gomez (Mendez ht), Koch, Orlic, Moffitt, Naumovski, Soper, Spiteri, Renaud.
WEST ADELAIDE: Blazincic, Vatsilas, Kokkinopolitis, Hooker, Slifkas, Cardozo, Cerro, Lazaridis, Blair (Brazzale 75), Brown, Mills.
SCORERS: Mills 8m og, Spiteri 47m, Renaud 57m for Parramatta. Brown 11m, Lazaridis 42m for Adelaide.
YELLOW CARDS: Spiteri 34m, Mendez 86 for Parramatta. Blair 46m, Brown 77m, Cerro 91m for Adelaide.
REFEREE: G Connolly.
POY POINTS: 3 — Renaud, 2 — Spiteri, 1 — Lazaridis.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Melb Knights	18	12	3	3	46	15	39
South Melb	18	11	4	3	32	11	37
Sydney United	18	10	3	5	24	23	33
Marconi	18	9	5	4	35	20	32
Brisbane	18	7	6	5	22	16	27
Syd Olympic	18	7	6	5	32	33	27
Adelaide City	18	6	7	5	30	19	25
Parramatta	18	6	6	6	18	18	24
Morwell	18	6	6	6	16	18	24
West Adelaide	18	6	3	9	24	24	21
Newcastle BHP	18	4	5	9	25	37	17
Wollongong	18	3	6	9	16	25	15
MelbBUSC	18	3	4	11	14	41	13
Heidelberg	18	2	4	12	12	46	10

LEADING GOALSCORERS

14 Mark Viduka .....(Melbourne Knights)
12 Warren Spink .....(Newcastle BHP)
10 Ivan Kelic.....(Sydney Olympic)
8 Joe Mullen.....(Adelaide City)
7 Francis Awaritefe....(South Melbourne)
7 Rodney Brown .....(Newcastle BHP)
7 Con Boutsianis .....(South Melbourne)
6 Adrian Cervinski ..(Melbourne Knights)
6 Manis Lamond .....(Sydney United)
6 John Markovski.....(Morwell Falcons)
6 Andrew Marth.....(Melbourne Knights)
6 Scott Ollerenshaw ...(Wollongong City)
6 Oliver Pondeljak...(Melbourne Knights)
6 Marshall Soper.....(Parramatta Eagles)

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40th birthday spree

ROUND 18
MELB KNIGHTS 6
SYDNEY UNITED 1
By Greg Blake
at Melb Croatian S.C.

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

In what shaped as an intriguing second versus third battle, Melbourne Knights put paid to Sydney United in emphatic fashion by blowing the Crows away with a stunning four-goal opening half. Shell-shocked United slammed the door on the media immediately after the game for what shaped as a crucial post mortem following that club's most galling defeat of the season.

Coach Manfred Schaefer was concise in his evaluation of Sydney's capitulation.

"Disappointment is an understatement," a shattered Schaefer said before addressing his troops.

"It was a shocking defeat and I just don't know what we are going to do with them."

It was a day of high celebrations for the Melbourne Knights club, skipper Jo Biskic celebrating his 250th CCSL game and the club itself honouring a host of past champions as it heralded in the club's fortieth birthday.

The Knights led after just 13 minutes as best on ground Andrew Marth met an Ollie Pondeljak cross with a glancing header which beat shell-shocked Sydney goalkeeper Tony Franken at the far post.

After 30 minutes Pondeljak was on the scoresheet as he chased down a beautifully flighted long ball from defence by Fausto De Amicis and knocked his shot first time as the ball dropped over Franken to make it 2-0.

The Knights struck again five minutes from the break, Mark Viduka's cross met with a bullet-like header by Adrian Cervinski to make it 3-0, Viduka made it 4-0 just before half-time.

Melbourne started the second half as it ended its first but a succession of wasted opportunities gave Sydney just a sniff, Tony Krslovic belting home a deflected shot for United's consolation goal.

The Knights, also denied by the woodwork on four other occasions in a remarkable display, continued the slaughter in the 77th minute, Biskic and Viduka toying with the defence before Biskic crossed from the line and Adrian Cervinski swivelled to blast home on the far post.

Eleven minutes from time the Knights struck once again, this time a David Zdrilic back-pass being sharked by Viduka who muscled his way past two tacklers before slamming home his 14th goal of the season.

"We knew we had to do something special with South Melbourne winning in Morwell last night," said 250-gamer Biskic.

"We gave a 100 percent effort and those four goals in the first half was just reward for that great effort."

MELB KNIGHTS: Miller, De Amicis, Horvat, Vanis, Marth, Trajcevski (Markovski 74), Biskic, Viduka, A Cervinski, Pondeljak (Vojtek 63), D Cervinski.
SYDNEY UNITED: Franken, Stanton, Kupresak, Popovic, Krslovic, Hristdoulou, Gibson, Zdrillic, Moric (Milicic 58), Okon, Jermen (Lamond ht).
SCORERS: Marth 13m, Pondeljak 29m, A Cervinski 40m, 77m, Viduka 44m and 79m for Melbourne Knights. Krslovic 69m for Sydney.
YELLOW CARDS: Krslovic 63m, Popovic 75m for Sydney.
REFEREE: P Spiers.
CROWD: 4,000.
POY: Marth 3, A Cervinski 2, Pondeljak 1.

Brave Wolves

ROUND 18
ADELAIDE CITY 0
WOLLONGONG CITY 0
By Tom McKain
at Hindmarsh Stadium

Adelaide City crashed out of the Top Six into seventh place when they were held to a goalless draw at Hindmarsh Stadium by a courageous Wollongong.

There were chances galore for the home side but once again the Wolves, who had beaten the Zebras 2-0 earlier this month in a postponed fixture, kept their cool.

The game was perhaps summed up by the first half statistics.

City's Steve Maxwell was set up by Carl Veart in the fifth minute, but blasted the ball over the bar from close range.

It was then the turn of Veart two minutes later when he struck too high, and in the 11th it was Goran Lozanovski who hit the ball over the bar.

Joe Mullen, City midfielder, and their top scorer with eight goals, then fired too high in the 14th minute, and four minutes later Lozanovski hit low but wide.

Wollongong's only striking attack in the first half came in the 32nd minute when Scott Ollerenshaw grazed the crossbar.

Wollongong later came close to scoring when Pedro Ricoy accepted a ball from Martin Ackers, only to see Bradley Hassell clear the ball off the City line.

Hassell was playing at right back in place of Paul Shillabeer, who underwent his ninth knee operation on Friday night.

City also had another change when Socceroo goalkeeper Robert Zabica pulled out at the last minute with a thigh injury.

Hassell, normally a striking midfielder or front runner did what he had to do in defence and also attacked, while reserve goalkeeper Jason Petkovic did everything asked of him in his debut in the National League.

A 19-year-old he was signed earlier in the season from the same Perth club, Spierwood, which had spawned Zabica.

Wollongong were also minus one of their stars in captain and key defender Charlie Yankos, who was suffering from "various recurring injuries".

It must be said that while City dominated the game, especially in the first half, they had no direct shot at goal apart from one by Damian Mori, who saw his low blow bounce out from the right-hand post.

At the other end of the field there was a similar incident when a shot from Paul McFadden hit the bar and stayed out.

The stage has now been set for a torrid derby on Sunday when City takes on West, now struggling for a Top Six spot after being beaten by Parramatta.

To add bite to the derby Gordon Pickard of Fairmount Homes has put up a $15,000 winner take all prize.

ADELAIDE CITY: Petkovic, Vidmar, Ivanovic, Tobin, Mori, Veart, Maxwell (Reda ht), Lozanovski, Melta, Mullen (Talladira 82), Hassell.
WOLLONGONG CITY: Hughes, O'Shea, Horsley, Lloyd, Ollerenshaw, Coveny, Bonetig (McFadden 82), McLaren, Ricoy, Forshaw, Ackers.
SCORERS: Nil.
YELLOW CARDS: O'Shea 16m for Wollongong.
REFEREE: J Fraser.
CROWD: 3,652.
POY: Ivanovic 3, Ricoy 2, Mori 1.

Brisbane strike Bergers

ROUND 18
HEIDELBERG UNITED 0
BRISBANE STRIKERS 1
By Con Stavros
at the Olympic Village

Heidelberg showed nothing in their match against Brisbane to suggest that their reputation as the league's worst team is unwarranted.

The Bergers, in now typical fashion, completely collapsed in the second half, allowing the Strikers to keep their dreams of a place in this year's finals series well and truly alive.

Brisbane snatched a valuable three points and slammed yet another stake in the Heidelberg corpse, with a neatly worked goal in the 61st minute.

Sean Cranney set up the Strikers' goal with a brilliant move down the left and a precise cut-back that was adroitly finished by Danny Wright.

Boosted by the goal, Brisbane then upped their tempo and laid siege to the Heidelberg goal for the remainder of the match.

Brad Ditton should have had the visitors further ahead in the 67th minute, but he inexplicably shot wide with goalkeeper Michael Chatzitrifonas well beaten.

Sean Cranney then watched in agony seconds later, after his surging run led to a partly deflected shot that was somehow slapped off the line by a desperately back-pedalling Chatzitrifonas.

Sean Cranney was the subject of even more misfortune late in the game as his header crashed into the crossbar following a well-judged pass by Chris Slater. Sean Cranney's misfortune in front of goal was tempered by his best-on-ground performance.

Even defender Alan Hunter got into the shooting act, having a spectacular volley saved by Chatzitrifonas in the closing minutes.

Heidelberg's collapse in the second half came as no surprise, given their abysmal form of late.

The Bergers have now lost five matches in succession and conceded 16 goals over that period, whilst scoring just one themselves.

Heidelberg missed a number of chances to boost their confidence early in the match, but Danny Gnjidic was once again the biggest culprit with a series of wasted chances.

Indictative of the problems at Olympic Village, Heidelberg coach Drago Sekularac fielded a reserve goalkeeper on the bench as one of his two listed substitutes.

Heidelberg clearly missed the talents of defender Doug Hodgson and leading scorer, Nemanja Obradovic, who was allegedly left out of the side for disciplinary reasons.

Brisbane are notoriously bad travellers, but even they managed to coast this game home as the Heidelberg heads once again fell in unison.

HEIDELBERG UTD: Chatzitrifonas, Iossifidis, Watson, Selemidis, Scott, MacNicol, Georgiadis, Vlahos (Varsos 76), Tiktikakis, Gnjidic, Michalakopoulos.
BRISBANE STRIKERS: Bolton, Pimblett, Hunter, Jackson, Phillips, Stowell, Wright, T Cranney, Slater, S Cranney, Ditton (Williams 75).
SCORERS: Wright 61m for Brisbane.
YELLOW CARDS: Scott 60m, Selemidis 70m for Heidelberg.
REFEREE: C Naumcevski.
CROWD: 1,000.
POY: S Cranney 3, T Cranney 2, Georgiadis 1.

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Marconi's magnificent seven

ROUND 18
MARCONI-FAIRFIELD 7
SYDNEY OLYMPIC 1
By Alfred Hiatt
at Marconi Stadium

MARCONI-Fairfield thundered a fearsome warning to the teams who want to take the championship away from them, by totally destroying Sydney Olympic with a magnificent seven goals.

Frank Arok's team needed to remind themselves, their supporters, and their opponents that they can play the total football that won them the CCSL title. Those who saw what they did to Olympic won't easily forget.

Such was the Fairfielders' dominance that you had the feeling any one of their players could have scored. Even Mark Schwarzer must have fancied his chances.

The Blue and Whites paid dearly for failing to close down Steve Corica in midfield. Allowing most attacking-minded players space to move is risky.

Allowing Corica space to move is suicide.

Arok had urged the Socceroo midfielder to do what he does best - run at defenders. The Marconi coach said: "People have been asking why he doesn't take on more responsibility. I just told him to take on everybody.

"It's easy to say they didn't close him down well enough, but how do you close down someone who is so mobile?

"But the whole team was incredibly mobile. It was a dream first half, and after the second goal all the chips which had been on our shoulders came off."

Branko Milosevic and Abbas Saad, stricken by the same virus that kept out defenders Tony Spyridakos and Elias Augerinos, crawled off their sickbeds to start for Olympic. Four goals and 45 minutes later they were feeling much worse.

As a result of Olympic's lack of midfield authority, the defence was caught square more often than a chartered accountant at a dance party.

Bizarrely enough for a team which conceded seven goals, goalkeeper Mike Gibson was their best player. The former Newcastle custodian produced five superb saves in the second half to prevent Marconi's tally reaching double figures. Andy Harper began and ended the scoring spree, his first a conversion of Matthew Bingley's cross, and his last a penalty after Angelo Petratos was sent off for bringing down Corica.

In between, Ian Gray and Gary Van Egmond scored with fine strikes, and Kimon Taliadoros' eight-match barren spell in front of goal ended when he beat a defender and got a toe in before the oncoming Gibson. As the ball trickled into the net he started running a circuit of the entire pitch, more out of relief than celebration.

Just after half-time Bingley scored a deserved goal when he rounded off more good work of Corica's and Darren Iocca joined the party four minutes before the end with a neat finish.

Ivan Kelic netted his sixth strike in the space of a week on 65 minutes, but it was cold comfort for Berti Mariani at the club he coached to championships in 1988 and 1989. However, Mariani refused to make excuses, saying: "Give Marconi the credit they deserve. They have a lot of good players, and you can't detract from their performance. We gave them too much space in midfield."

Taliadoros, unfortunate not to score three on the night, said; "It was the best 90 minutes we have played all season. The fans have been starved of the type of football they expect, but there is no reason why we can't maintain this standard".

Ominous words for Marconi's rivals at the top.

MARCONI-FAIRFIELD: Schwarzer, Jolevski, De marigny, Bingley, Gray, Kuleski (Johnson 82), Van Egmond, Taliadoros (Iocca 79), Corica, Harper, Talay.
SYDNEY OLYMPIC: Gibson, Barrett, Petratos, Sorras, Tsekenis, maloney, Milosevic (Lee 45), Kelic, Trajanovski, saad (Tome 45), Mendes.
YELLOW CARDS: Taliadoros (76) for Marconi. Red Cards: Petratos (90) for Olympic.
SCORERS: Harper (11, 90), Gray (17), Van Egmond (27), Taliadoros (40), Bingley (47), Iocca (89) for Marconi. Kelic (65) for Olympic.
CROWD: 8,978 Referee: Richard Lorenc
P.O.Y.: Corica - 3, Bingley - 2, Gibson - 1.

Midfield inspiration: Corica was brilliant, as was everyone else playing for Marconi.

Stylish Blues triumph

ROUND 18
MORWELL FALCONS 0
SOUTH MELBOURNE 1
By Greg Blake
at Morwell Falcons Park

South Melbourne hung on to record a dramatic victory over tenacious Morwell Falcons in front of a packed house in the Latrobe Valley.

South Melbourne, whose travelling support drew the biggest crowd of the season to Morwell, won an overly physical clash through Frances Awaritefe in the 26th minute.

The goal itself was an awkward scrambled effort, Awaritefe firing home an initial shot which was stopped by Morwell 'keeper Steve Mautone. South's Angie Goutzioulis crashed a header against the crossbar and Awaritefe followed up to net the rebound.

Despite an impressive show of grit and tenacity, the Falcons lacked the polish to get an equaliser in front of a huge contingent of local supporters.

Morwell fans and Australian Soccer Federation dignitaries had turned out for the official opening of Morwell's 3000 capacity grandstand complex.

And the huge crowd wasn't disappointed with the spectacle.

Hero of the night for South Melbourne was young defender Michael Valkanis whose spirited marking performance completely quelled the threat of Morwell danger man John Markovski.

Valkanis frustrated his bigger and stronger opponent out of the game and the physical duels which dominated the match almost spilled over between the two camps at the final whistle.

Several players became involved in push and shove matches as referee Gordon Dunster blew for full-time and it was only the cool heads of some other players and officials which kept tempers from boiling over.

South Melbourne always produced the crisper, cleaner moves and class told in the final result.

However, Morwell had South Melbourne back-peddling in a furious final 15 minutes.

Morwell's heroes were sweeper Steve Douglas, whose timely tackles averted several promising South Melbourne attacks, and goalkeeper Mautone who produced several world class saves, including a memorable turnover of a screaming drive from 30 metres by Blues' defender Mehmet Durakovic.

Morwell's best chance came just after half time on a quick break from midfield, Douglas sending Lachlan Armstrong away and the former Dundee youngster seeing his angled drive turned around the post by South Melbourne goalkeeper Dean Anastasidis.

"I expected a very tough game and we got what we expected," said South Melbourne coach Jim Pyrgolios.

"The game was worthy of a grand final and I'm very happy with the effort of the boys."

"Morwell is a very physical side and always difficult to beat."

MORWELL: Mautone, Upton, Canosa, Douglas, Parton, Donnelly, Sevin, Markovski, Armstrong, Trpcevski (Waddell 80), Djordjevic.
SOUTH MELBOURNE: Anastasiadis, Muscat, Hasler, Durakovic, Polak, Wade, Tasios (Tsolakis 70), Trimboli (Stubbins 81), Awaritefe, Valkanis, Goutzioulis.
GOALS: Awaritefe 26m for Sth Melb.
YELLOW CARDS: Donnelly 27m and Upton 29m for Morwell, Awaritefe 7m and Goutzioulis 40m for Sth Melbourne.
REFEREE: Gordon Dunster.
CROWD: 8256.
POY: 3—Valkanis, 2—Douglas, 1—Muscat.

Breakers draw

ROUND 18
NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 1
MELBOURNE BUSC 1
By Richard French
at Mitre 10 Stadium

THE Newcastle Breakers missed a golden opportunity to put a troubled and winless month behind them when they drew with struggling Melbourne BUSC.

Breakers' striker Warren Spink, whose future at the club should be decided this week, scored his 12th goal of the season in the 26th minute.

But Newcastle's poor defence allowed Andrew Zinni to grab an equaliser in the 85th minute.

Spink, a former Socceroo stayed in second place on the league scoring list with Mark Viduka of the Melbourne Knights leading, but the Breakers' board was to consider last night taking him off the transfer list after a wrangle over his alleged failure to meet off-field commitments as a development officer.

Despite the apparent disquiet in the Breakers' camp last week, coach Jim Foley's 11th-placed side appeared set to widen the gap on second-last BUSC with a solid first half.

A steady build-up from the back started by Mark Jones saw veteran David Lowe play a piercing diagonal ball to Spink who, although denied on his first attempt by 'keeper Jim Kourtis, rounded the defence to smack home Newcastle's goal.But the second half was a different story with a rejuvenated BUSC, playing for only four weeks under former Melbourne Knights coach Ken Murphy, making the most of Newcastle's lack of organisation.

Only some poor shooting from long range saved Newcastle from embarrassment, but Zinni had only to beat Clint Gosling after the Breakers' defence cracked under pressure from Seb Emmanuele and substitute Joe Tricarico.

It was only some fine work by Gosling, who is facing the added pressure of the imminent signing of Craig Carter, which saved Newcastle from defeat.

Gosling blocked a close-range shot by Tricarico to his left, then somehow managed to reach the right post in time to prevent Ross Aloisi from scoring.

Murphy said that although his team was lucky to be down only 1-0 at half-time, he was pleased with its second-half performance.

"This side takes 45 minutes to get going because they are playing scared," Murphy said.

"Before I came they'd taken a lot of big beatings, they're scared of making mistakes and of trying anything, but I'm happy to get a draw."

Foley said that the match was "typical of how things have been going for us".

"I guess it's a little bit the result of a team not high on confidence," Foley said.

"Although I couldn't see any obvious signs of it, I suppose all the attention on things happening off the field could be having an effect."

NEWCASTLE: Gosling, Maier, Roberts, Stewart, Jones, Jennings, Brown, Spink, Lowe (Naumov half-time), Owens, Tredinnick (Halpin 70).
BUSC: Kourtis, Kuzmanovic, Della Rocca, Cahut, McGeachy (Mazzini 72), Aloisi, Zinni, Emmanuele, Karkaletsis, Tombolato, Pillemer (Tricarico half-time).
SCORERS: Spink 26, Zinni 85.
YELLOW CARDS: Roberts 21, Tombolato 43.
REFEREE: N. Jones.
CROWD: 2,227.
POY POINTS: 3 — Zinni, 2 Tombolato, 1 — Naumov.

MIDWEEK ROUND 17 CCSL MATCHES

ROUND 17
WEST ADELAIDE 1
MORWELL FALCONS 2
By Tom McKain
at Hindmarsh Stadium

THE Hindmarsh Stadium hoodoo struck West Adelaide again last Tuesday night when they went down to Morwell.

It is a frightening thought for coach Raul Blanco that his team, so packed with potential talent, has won only one game at home, with one draw and five losses.

While Tuesday's match was delayed because of the furnace-like heat, it was the same for both teams and it was Morwell who coped best, with John Markovski scoring from a 25-metre free kick in the 48th minute, while Lachlan Armstrong struck after 62 minutes. West's consolation was a Robbie Hooker penalty a minute before full-time after Raymond Blair had been brought down by former West import Claudio Canosa.

West have five more games at home — against Adelaide City, Heidelberg, Brisbane, Wollongong, and in the final round, Sydney United. Blanco will be hoping to exorcise that hoodoo before the run home.

For Morwell boss Bobby McLachlan the season is shaping up as a cliffhanger.

Only goal difference kept him out of the Top Six before last weekend, trailing Brisbane and sixth-placed Adelaide City.

Blanco is adamant his team can still make the play-offs.The only certainty is that we are in for a grandstand finish.

WEST ADELAIDE: Blazincic, Haniotis, Hooker, Kokkinoplitis, Lazaridis, Slifkas, Vatsilas, Blair, Brown Cardosa, Cerro (Brazzale ht).
MORWELL: Mautone, Upton, Canosa, Douglas, Parton, Donnelly, Sevin, Armstrong, Trpcevski, Djordjevic, Markovski (Stergiopoulos 88m).
SCORERS: Markovski (48th min. Armstrong 62nd, Hooker 89).
YELLOW CARDS: Haniotis, Slifkas, Cardoza, Upton.
REFEREE: John Papanicols.
CROWD: 1063.
POY POINTS: 3 — Mautone, 2 — Markovski, 1— Blair.

ROUND 17
WOLLONGONG 0
PARRAMATTA 1
By Phil Murphy
at Brandon Park

PARRAMATTA may have been badly depleted but they turned in a fighting performance to beat Wollongong City. With striker Marshall Soper and midfielders Gabriel Mendez and Geoff Gunning in the grandstand suspended, Parramatta showed plenty of spirit. They were aided by some charitable passing from Wollongong.

The Wolves' passing was diabolical at times and they were sadly lacking direction from midfield. It was ironic that Parramatta was so well served in this department by Ljubco Naumovski.

The former Vardar player started the season training at Brandon Park but his pay demands were too much for Wollongong. Naumovski obviously got what he wanted from Parramatta and has settled into the team particularly well. Garry Gomez, who turned in a strong performance, scored the winning goal two minutes after half-time.

With Wollongong's defence caught out, as it has been so often this season, Gomez had plenty of time to run onto the ball 15 metres out and crash it past goalkeeper Brett Hughes.

Parramatta had to do plenty of defensive work from that point but did it well, Nick Orlic and Craig Moffitt leading the way.

John Koch also played well, as did the consistent Glenn Gwynne.

Wollongong created precious little, Vaughan Coveny heading over the top in the first half after Martin Bourke sent a high lob up the middle.

Even when forced to defend for most of the second half, Parramatta always gave the impression they could sneak another goal on the break.

The Eagles introduced Cameroon international striker Cyrille Ndongo Keller in place of Soper. The newcomer arrived in Australia two days before the game, and under the circumstances did quite well. Coach Rale Rasic said after the game his players had their backs to the wall and came through well.

"It is never easy to win down here but we showed plenty of fight," Rasic said. "Naumovski is a big asset, he is a tough grafter and certainly not a pussycat looking for an easy time in this league."

More bad news for Wolves coach David Ratcliffe was having full back Martin Bourke booked, as he is now out for three matches. Ratcliffe said his team was very disappointing. "If you can't pass properly you don't score goals and we fell down badly in that aspect of our play ," he said.

WOLLONGONG: Hughes, Forshaw, O'Shea, McLaren, Bourke (Lloyd 75), Horsley, McFadden, Grbevski, Coveny, White (Ollerenshaw 60), Ackers.
PARRAMATTA: Gunning, Ciantar, Gwynna, Gomez, Koch, Orlic, Moffitt, Naumovski, Renaud, Spiteri, Ndongokeller (Sprod 85).
SCORER: Gomez (47)
REFEREE: Peter Spiers.
YELLOW CARDS: Bourke (W) 56m.
CROWD: 3,217.
POY POINTS: 3 — Naumovski (P), 2 — Gwynne (P), 1 — Horsley (W).

ROUND 17
MELB KNIGHTS 5
HEIDELBERG 0
By Greg Blake
at Melb Croat S.C

A three-goal blitz inside seven minutes by the Melbourne Knights crushed aimless Heidelberg in the Australia Day massacre last Wednesday evening.

Just as the battling Bergers looked set to go in at the interval with a 0-0 scoreline to play with, the Mark Viduka-inspired Knights rolled into top gear and scored in the 37th, 42nd and 44th minutes to put paid to Heidelberg's challenge.

It was really a no contest after the mercurial Viduka arrogantly opened the scoring with a lazy glancing header from skipper Jo Biskic's cross.

Whilst Melbourne 'keeper David Miller had to amuse himself with some goalmouth sprints to keep himself awake, the Knights went on a rampage at the other end.

Biskic provided the second goal for Andrew Marth to score from close range and rookie Heidelberg defender Richard Watson, given the unenviable task of checking Viduka, made it 3-0 when his attempted intercept of a Fausto De Amicis pass cannoned off his leg and past his own goalkeeper.

Half-time sub Damien Vojtek, who might have scored a treble himself, set up Zoran Trajcevski for the Knights' fourth in the 63rd minute and the 'V Bomber' himself capped it off with a beauty 20 minutes from full-time.

Heidelberg 'keeper Mike Chatzitrifonas conceded a free kick on the edge of his own area and Viduka, as easy as you'd like, stepped up and casually curled the ball over the Berger's wall and into the top corner of the net. Game, set and match.

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS: Chatzitrifonas, Bratten, Scott, Iosofidis, MacNichol (Vrasos 67), Michalakopoulos, Obradovic, Selemidis, Tiktikakis, Georgiadis, Watson.
HEIDELBERG UTD: Chatzitrifonas, Bratten, Scott, Iosofidis, MacNichol (Vrasos 67), Michalakopoulos, Obradovic, Selemidis, Tiktikakis, Georgiadis, Watson.
GOALS: Viduka 37m and 70m, Marth 42m, Watson own goal 44m and Trajcevski 63m for Melbourne Knights.
YELLOW CARDS: Chatzitrofonas 69m for Heidelberg.
CROWD: 3,000.
POY POINTS: 3 — Viduka (MK), 2 — Biskic (MK), 1 — Marth (MK).

ROUND 17
BRISBANE STRIKERS 2
MARCONI-FAIRFIELD 0
By Glenn Davies
at Perry Park

QUEENSLAND soccer received a huge boost, thanks to a stunning 2-0 win by Brisbane Strikers over Sydney's glamour side Marconi-Fairfield on Australia Day.

The Strikers, spearheaded by young guns Troy and Sean Cranney and speedy midfielder Chris Slater, rewarded a record home crowd of 4016 with a vintage performance which surely would have drawn the attention of national coach Eddie Thomson — had he been there. Despite endless calls from Strikers officials for Thomson to put aside what now appears to be an anti-Brisbane bias, the Socceroo coach is yet to see the Strikers this season on their home turf.

There were no excuses for Marconi — it wasn't hot and the ground overflowed with atmosphere.

The champions were simply outplayed in every department by a slick outfit, which boasted a fine blend of youth and experience.

Perhaps Marconi thought they were coming to a non-soccer city.

But judging by the huge and growing support, soccer in Queensland is back. Marconi can thank one-time Australian 'keeper Mark Schwarzer for keeping the scoreline to a respectable level after he pulled off at least five sensational saves. Troy Cranney again produced a sizzling performance with his tireless running which continually bamboozled the so-called Sydney high flyers including Marconi's superstar Steve Corica.

Brisbane's emphatic win, rated the side's best performance of the season by coach Bruce Stowell, has left them in the hunt for a Top Six berth.

The Strikers, coming off their first loss in nine games against Adelaide City, opened their account just before half-time when former Socceroo Alan Hunter let fly with a neatly placed shot off an indirect free kick from Gary Phillips. The match was sealed in the 73rd minute when Slater struck a right foot thunderbolt from 30 metres into the top corner of the net.

BRISBANE: Bolton, Pimblett, Hunter, Jackson, Phillips, Stowell (C Williams 58m), Wright, T Cranney, Slater, S Cranney, Ditton (Hillier 79m).
MARCONI: Schwarzer, Van Egmond, De Marigny, Bingley, Gray, Kuleski, Johnson, Corica, Harper, Talay (Iocca 74m), McCulloch (Meredith 45m).
YELLOW CARDS: Stowell (28m) for Brisbane Strikers. Meredith (53m) for Marconi.
SCORERS: Hunter (35m), Slater (73m).
RED CARDS: Nil. CROWD: 4016.
REFEREE: Neil Jones (Newcastle).
POY POINTS: 3 - T Cranney, 2 - Schwarzer, 1 - S Cranney.

Parramatta Eagles stopper Nick Orlic continued his impressive season with a strong performance in his side's important defeat of Wollongong City on Australia Day. Orlic's height and unflappable temperament have marked him as one of the CCSL's stars of the future.

ROUND 17
SYDNEY OLYMPIC 3
ADELAIDE CITY 3
By John Economos
at Leichhardt Oval

As was the case in the first round when these two giant clubs clashed, the battle ended in a 3-3 draw. And as was the case in the first round, it was left to the visitors (this time Adelaide City) to fight back from being 3-1 down.

Olympic's lanky striker, Ivan Kelic, with a great display of aerial power, scored a marvellous hat-trick of headers to lift the home side to what seemed an unassailable 3-1 lead by the 66th minute.

Adelaide City showed enormous character, greatly inspired by the unyielding work-rate from right defender, Paul Shillabeer and tenacious midfielders, Joe Mullen and Sergio Melta to lock up a 3-3 draw.

Although Olympic felt convinced that they had the match sewn up, they ignored Adelaide's fighting character. Mullen powered in his second goal in the 72nd minute from a cross by substitute Bradley Hassell, whilst the all-action striker Damian Mori scored the equaliser six minutes from time, again from more fine work by Hassell.

SYDNEY OLYMPIC: Gibson: Barrett, Sorras, Mendez, Augerinos: Maloney, Saad, Tsekenis, Milosevic (Lee 83rd): Trajanovski, Kelic.
ADELAIDE CITY: Zabica: Shillabeer, Tobin, Ivanovic, T.Vidmar: Veart, Reda (Hassell 66th), Melta, Mullen: Mori, Maxwell.
SCORERS: Kelic 15th, 24th and 66th for Olympic, Mullen 36th and 72nd, Mori 84th for Adelaide City.
YELLOW CARDS. Nil.
REFEREE: Derek Crawford.
P.O.Y. 3-Kelic, 2-Mullen, 1-Shillabeer.

ROUND 17
SYDNEY UNITED 2
MELBOURNE BUSC 1
at Sydney Croatian S.C.

Super-sub Mario Jermen leapt off the bench to grab a late winner as Sydney United continued their march up the league ladder.

New-look Brunswick appeared to have secured a draw when George Karkalitsis scored from the penalty spot with five minutes remaining, but the Crows had other ideas.

Earlier, Tony Krslovic had given Manfred Schaefer's side a half-time lead with a 35th minute strike.

SYDNEY UNITED: Zeljko Kalac, Rob Stanton, Velimir Kupresak, Tony Popovic, Tony Krslovic, Eric Hristodoulou, John Gibson, David Zdrilic, Klaus Okon, Ante Milicic (Mario Jermen), Manis Lamond (Ante Moric).
MELBOURNE BUSC: Jim Kourtis, Alex Kuzmanokic, Robert Ferla, Abrio Cahut, Archie McGeachy, Sasha Becvinovski (Seb Emmanuelle), Ross Aloisi, Andrew Zinni, George Karkalitis, Robert Tombolato, John Pilemer (Michael Mazzini).
REFEREE: Chris Smyth.
SCORERS: 34 — Tony Krslovic (Utd), 85 — George Karkalitsis (BUSC - pen), 89 — Mario Jermen (Utd).
YELLOW CARDS: Alex Kuzmanokic (BUSC), Zeljko Kalac (Utd).
CROWD: 3,024.
POY: Krslovic - 3, Kourtis - 2, Tombolato - 1

ROUND 17
STH MELB. 4
NEWCASTLE 1
By Con Stavros
at Middle Park

NEWCASTLE Breakers shocked South Melbourne with a goal in the first half of their Australia Day clash, before being overwhelmed in the second half.

Warren Spink put the Breakers in front against the run of play in the 38th minute, converting a penalty he earned after goalkeeper Dean Anastasiadis brought him down following a mix-up with defender Paul Wade.

Angie Goutzioulis got the Blues back in the match with his third goal in three games as he headed home a corner in the 64th minute from Peter Tsolakis, who had just come on as a substitute.

Souths threw everything and everybody at Newcastle looking for the winner, and only had to wait six minutes before Mehmet Durakovic put them ahead with a shot helped home by a wild deflection.

Just a minute later Tsolakis put the match beyond doubt with a classic strike and Kevin Muscat rounded off an impressive second-half South Melbourne performance with a beautiful solo goal in the 89th minute.

SOUTH MELBOURNE: Anastasiadis, Muscat, Goutzioulis, Durakovic, Polak, Wade, Tasios, Trimboli, Valkanis, Awaritefe, Boutsianis (Tsolakis 63).
NEWCASTLE: Gosling, Maier, Roberts, Stewart, Jones, Jennings, Brown, Owens, Tredinnick, Spink (Naumov 80), Lowe (Halpin 72).
SCORERS: Spink 38 pen for Newcastle, Goutzioulis 64, Durakovic 70, Tsolakis 71 and Muscat 89 for South Melbourne.
YELLOW CARDS: Maier 8 for Newcastle and Anastasiadis 37 for South Melbourne.
REFEREE: Gerry Connolly.
CROWD: 1800.
POY POINTS: 3 — Tasios (SM), 2 — Muscat (SM), 1 — Goutzioulis (SM).

3-PAGE CLUB INFO'

Meredith missing

– Marconi-Fairfield by Anthony Raineri –

NEW Marconi-Fairfield recruit Nick Meredith missed the Sydney Olympic match on Saturday night because of suspension.

The 26-year-old had received a yellow card in his debut match on Wednesday against Brisbane Strikers.

Coach Frank Arok said he was disappointed Meredith missed a match so soon after joining the club.

"Against Brisbane, Nick played well," Arok said. "What he did was constructive.

"He made some good raids and good crosses.

"He contributed well.

"I'm not happy that he was suspended."

Speaking of Meredith's debut match, Arok said the former Newcastle player came in for plenty of attention from his opponents.

Meredith had agreed to join Brisbane but changed his mind when Marconi showed some interest.

The Fairfielders continue to attract bumper crowds everywhere they play.

Over 4000 people turned up at Perry Park last Wednesday night to form one of Brisbane Strikers' largest ever crowds.

Arok said the reason for his club's appeal was simple.

"We are the champions and everybody wants to beat the champions," he said.

Suspension: Nick Meredith missed the thrashing of Olympic.

What a midfield!

– South Melbourne by Con Stavros –

MIKE Petersen is back at South Melbourne.

The former Socceroo midfielder has recently returned form a six month loan spell with Malaysian club Pahang and spoke with South officials following the Blues' recent match against Sydney United.

"He has made the commitment to return — he is a quality player who is welcome back in the squad," coach Jim Pyrgolios said.

The addition of Petersen naturally enhances the South squad, but places an extra slab of pressure on Pyrgolios's shoulders come selection time.

South Melbourne now has enough midfielders to field two highly competitive teams.

One certainty in selection is Jason Polak, who is clearly turning out to be one of the best buys ever for those signing the cheques at Middle Park.

Despite a recent illness, Steve Tasios is another that would be hard to budge, given his season so far. Similarly Angie Goutzioulis has done nothing wrong all year and has proved the doubters, who questioned his purchase from Heidelberg at the start of the year, to be way off mark.

Goutzioulis' former Berger buddy, Phil Stubbins, now at South, is a quality player destined to battle for a spot. And what about poor Peter Tsolakis?

The diminutive and dashing winger has played a zillion CCSL games and is spending most of his time sitting frustrated on the bench.

Although he'd never admit it, Socceroo skipper Paul Wade must be looking at the arrival of Stubbins and the return of Petersen and feeling a little frustration of his own. Wade has made it clear he'll do anything for South over the last year, but it is no secret he'd prefer to be prowling the midfield rather than marking opposing forwards.

Had South chased a quality defender with as much urgency as their midfield purchases this season, Wade may be happy in midfield alongside Polak right now.

The weight of midfield talent has meant an unnatural balance to the team in recent weeks and that was perfectly demonstrated to astonished Blues fans in the match against Sydney United, when Polak lined up in a left back position, allowing Stubbins to have the central midfield role.

"I realised in the first 20 minutes that it wasn't working as I expected," admitted Pyrgolios later.

Super sub: Peter Tsolakis is becoming increasingly frustrated.

ASF summons Kat

– Sydney Olympic by Sarah Clarry –

SYDNEY Olympic youth team coach Peter Katholos has been summoned to appear before the ASF to answer charges of bringing the game into disrepute.

The summons by the ASF relates to comments made by Katholos which appeared in an Australian and British Soccer Weekly article recently, and concerned refereeing performances.

However, Katholos has refused to back down on the issue, and says the Federation needs to be able to look at the problem.

"We try to make some constructive criticisms, and all they do is call you up to be disciplined," he said.

He believes there is a need within the game for "injured" parties to have their grievances heard and addressed, rather than just gagged.

Katholos suggests a meeting between players, coaches and officials to hear all points of view and come to a workable solution.

"Other codes have done it, and it's what we need to do," he said.

"We can't have people refereeing a game that have no character or authority. We need people who are respected."

In less controversial club goings-on, both Andrew Bernal and Joe Caleta should be back for this weekend's home match against Heidelberg.

However, Tony Spyridakos is the third victim of a virus which has run through the team, after George Sorras and Abbas Saad, however he is expected to make a fairly quick recovery.

In hot water: Katholos' comments infuriated the ASF.

Adelaide derby

– Adelaide City by Sarah Clarry –

ADELAIDE City this week has the opportunity to rub salt into the wound they created with their first-round flogging of West Adelaide, when they meet again at Hindmarsh Stadium this Sunday.

But coach Zoran Matic said that all form and table positions must be disregarded in such a game.

"A derby match is a derby match," he said. "They're impossible to predict."

However, he expressed concern over the way his team has played recently, especially against Sydney Olympic last Wednesday.

While many would argue that City did well to salvage the late draw, Matic is of the school of thought that they should never have found themselves two goals behind to begin with.

"I wasn't happy with the way they played. Apart from the first goal (from Olympic) the goals were very soft."

Tony Vidmar was the only casualty of the game — he injured a hip and missed a couple of training sessions.

Looking ahead, City have their show match against Mitsubishi Urawa Red Diamonds.

Hip problem: Tony Vidmar picked up a slight injury.

Matic is unsure of how they will go, as he says he hasn't seen any "J" League sides play.

"All I know of them is that they have some reputable players," he said.

"Beyond that we'll have to wait and see."

Crows make profit

– Sydney United by Anthony Raineri –

SYDNEY United is having a successful season off the field as well as on.

Not only is the team in the top three on the points table but the club looks like turning around the operating loss of the 1992-93 season.

"The financial position of the club is a vast improvement on last season," club media spokesman Ivan Blazevic said.

"We believe that if everything goes according to schedule until the end of the season, we will have an operating profit.

"Last year there was an unnecessary loss which we are trying to eliminate."

Blazevic said the club's sound financial position was a tribute to the hard work put in by the brand new committee which was elected in June.

Hajduk Split — the Under 18 European champions — left Australia last Wednesday night after a three-week tour.

The Croatian team played about 10 matches in Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney without defeat.

They were hosted by Sydney United, Melbourne Knights and NSW Super League club Canberra Deakin.

Hajduk Split's last match was a 2-1 victory against Sydney United's youth team on Wednesday.

Manfred Schaefer was one of many observers impressed by the visiting team.

"They were very, very good," he said. "You can tell they're full-time players and that all they do is train.

"They were very comfortable on the ball."

Top three: Tony Popovic's team has succeeded on the field.

The quiet Knights

– Melb. Knights by Con Stavros –

THEY may have extraordinary depth and a blend of talent, but many onlookers would be forgiven for thinking the Melbourne Knights are a two-man band.

That's not to say that Mark Viduka and Josip Biskic don't deserve the praise. The diminutive 34-year-old midfield maestro and the solid 19-year-old scoring sensation could probably give some teams a run for their money on their own. It's just that the Knights are in reality, away from the newspaper headlines and SBS cameras, a glorious team.

Starting at the top is the unheralded coach, Mirko Bazic. The 55-year-old import promoted cries of Mirko Who? early in the season and now three quarters of the way in and a zillion wins later, it's still Mirko Who?

In defence Fausto De Amicis has toiled through endless games with his flashing speed and skill, but poor Fausto got more PR when he was with Brunswick in the Victorian Premier League.

Another defender who got the spotlight in the Premier League, but is overlooked so often when it comes to naming all-star teams in the CCSL, is the highly talented sweeper Steve Horvat.

If Horvat gets a raw deal, then the man in front of him is perhaps the most underrated of all the Knights.

They may have the "V-Bomber" in Viduka and "V-2" in Damian Vojtek, but Vlado Vanis is the victor when it comes to rock solid defence and under-exposure. Dubbed the "bullmoose" by fans for his stubborn approach, Vanis should be dubbed the "V-Bouncer", given that hardly anyone gets past him without a valid reason.

Goalkeeper David Miller has his critics, but he is still a top performer and way further forward Ollie Pondeljak and Adrian Cervinski are admirable and consistent marksmen alongside Viduka.

Andrew Marth gets his share of the spoils in midfield, but hands up anyone who knew Zoran Trajcevski even played for the Knights, let alone has led the club so far in terms of number of minutes played this season.

All this of course is exactly how the Knights want it. None of the players mentioned would even hint at dissatisfaction at their profile level. The job this year is simply to silence the knockers and finally fulfil the destiny of a championship.

Biskic has the experience and Viduka the broad shoulders to carry the weight of the spotlight. For Trajcevski, Horvat, Vanis and company, the joy of a victory lap come Grand Final day will be all the reward required.

Out of the media spotlight: Knights' striker Ollie Pondeljak.

Mendez on a mission

–Parramatta by Alfred Hiatt –

CONTROVERSIAL midfielder Gabriel Mendez will be a man on a mission for the rest of the season.

The talented playmaker, who admits his form has been up and down, said: "I want to prove a point to myself over the next nine games.

"I have to push myself to maintain a peak standard, and hopefully show some consistency."

Mendez remains confident Parramatta can force its way up the league ladder: "We all believe we can be there, and once we get into the Top Six we'll do very well in the play-offs."

Eagles president Sam Vella revealed the club is negotiating with a very prominent local striker.

The club has already benefited from the arrival of 20-year-old Cameroon import Cyrille Ndongo Keller, but is seeking more firepower up front to cement a play-off spot.

Meanwhile, luckless midfielder Jason Falzon will be out of action for a further two and a half months.

Falzon completely ruptured the ligaments of his right ankle against Heidelberg on January 3, and will follow a program of weights, bicycling and swimming to repair the damage.

Falzon, who feels he had established his position in the side when injury struck, said: "The team is good enough to make the Top Six, but we've got to keep picking up points at home."

Another injured former Eagle, Paul Foster, is still two months away from a full recovery from a severe knee injury. Foster is undecided whether he will return to Parramatta once he regains full fitness.

Point to prove: Gabriel Mendez.

McKinna quits torn Breakers

– Newcastle by Alfred Hiatt –

VETERAN striker Lawrie McKinna quit Newcastle Breakers because he felt he was not given a fair run in the first grade squad.

McKinna said the final straw came when he was dropped from the squad to play South Melbourne last Wednesday.

The ex-Apia player stated: "I came off the bench against West Adelaide, and played well, though the team got hammered. When I was told I wasn't even in the squad for the next game I decided I'd had enough.

"I'd been in good form, and I had scored eight goals in reserve grade, so I expected to keep my place in the squad.

"It was hard to break into the side with Browny and Spinky banging in goals up front, but I thought I could have had a go in other positions."

McKinna's move to the Breakers on loan from Blacktown City at the beginning of the season capped a remarkable comeback from a career-threatening broken leg.

The former Kilmarnock professional said he had not fallen out with Breakers coach Jim Foley: "I had nothing against the coach, I always got on well with the guy.

"He tried to talk me into staying, but it was a matter of principle. I had made a decision and I had to stick to it."

McKinna, who will now resume training with Blacktown, confirmed that there was player unrest at the club.

His loss will further weaken a Newcastle squad rocked by the departure of Nick Meredith and the continuing drama surrounding Warren Spink.

Back at Blacktown: Lawrie McKinna.

West Adelaide heads north

– West Adelaide by Sarah Clarry –

WEST Adelaide will travel to Darwin on Tuesday, February 15, after their match against Marconi, to play the Darwin Cubs in a midweek friendly.

The club approached West Adelaide with the invitation and coach Raul Blanco saw many benefits in accepting the offer.

He said, "It's a good chance to promote the game in other places.

"It's also an opportunity for them to see the standard of the National League, and it is always interesting for us to see what level other teams are at."

The Cubs are representing the Northern Territory in the new Singapore League that kicks off this year.

There will also be a Perth side in the competition.

George Haniotis' return from injury was short-lived — he was suspended for the club's match against Parramatta after being booked for a bad tackle in the Morwell game.

However, he should be back and available for this weekend's return leg of the Adelaide derby, with the Sharks this time at "home" to Adelaide City.

The club will be looking to avenge the first-round result, if not reverse it.

City won the last match 4-1, with all four of their goals coming in the first 20 minutes.

However, with the team finding goals a little easier to come by as the season progresses, West Adelaide should look forward to a better result this time around.

Seeing benefits: Raul Blanco.

Falcons' finals push

– Morwell Falcons by Con Stavros –

"EVEN if we just made the finals and lost in the first round, that would be a great achievement for a team so young."

The words belong to Morwell's super-talented goalkeeper Steve Mautone, contemplating the Falcons' push for the Top Six play-offs.

The Latrobe Valley outfit has made remarkable progress in the competition since their elevation into the elite at the start of last season.

"Last year we would have been over the moon to lose 1-0 to a team like South Melbourne," says coach Bobby McLachlan. "Now we are disappointed if we don't win.

"That shows you how far this team has come in a year."

The Falcons indeed have arrived in the big time and despite a honeymoon flirtation with the finals last year, are serious contenders for their first foray into the heady Top Six atmosphere this campaign.

"This year is really make or break for us," says Marketing Manager Ray McCluskey. "Last year we were the new kids on the block.

"Now everyone has worked us out and I think if we can survive this year we'll be in the CCSL for a long time to come."

McCluskey has clearly tried to downplay his clubs finals chances all year, helping to fuel the mystique of the Morwell over-achievers.

The hard facts, however, are that despite the laid back country approach, the Falcons have as hot a squad of players as any team in the league outside of the big three (South Melbourne, Melbourne Knights and Marconi).

The proliferation of injuries over the last month has likewise served as a distraction for club fans and despite its basis of truth, served as a convenient excuse pit.

"You can't even be jocular about it (injuries) anymore," says McLachlan, laying the basis of any defeat firmly at bad fortune's doorstep.

The lines are clearly filtering through to the players, like Shaun Parton, one of the many who spent a few weeks on the sidelines recently.

"It's a great result considering we've never put the same side out on the park two weeks in a row," said Parton after the Falcons recent victory over Wollongong.

"No-one even knows what our best team is yet because of the problems we've had.

"If we can avoid injuries and suspensions, who knows, we may make the finals.

"I'm confident because we've got some quality players." Now that's the truth.

Play-offs push: Steve Mautone believes Morwell can make it.

Record of failure

– Heidelberg United by Con Stavros –

IN case you hadn't noticed by now, Heidelberg have conceded an astonishing number of goals this year. After 16 rounds, goalkeeper Michael Chatzitrifonas has plucked the ball from his net 40 times.

Should that average of 2.5 times per match continue, the Bergers are set to shatter the abysmal record of 64 goals conceded in a season, set by Brisbane last year.

Whilst Heidelberg have leaked like a sieve in defence, they haven't exactly created havoc at the opposite end of the park to compensate. Their pitiful 12 goals scored after 16 rounds, at an average of 0.75 per match, means that they are on target to score just 19 goals all season.

For the record, Heidelberg conceded 40 goals in all of last season, whilst managing to knock in 30.

If that wasn't enough for the dubious distinction file, the Bergers are already kings of being thrashed. In their first 16 games, poor Heidelberg has lost by three goals or more on seven separate occasions. Four of those massacres, to make things worse, have come in front of their own suffering fans.

Heidelberg fans who believe that last year's eleventh place finish was a golden era compared to this year, can be further heartened by the news that Heidelberg only lost by three goals or more on three occasions last season. As well Heidelberg defeated heavyweights South Melbourne, Parramatta, Adelaide City and Sydney United.

This year's abysmal showings have been blamed on the loss of players and the air of defeat and resignation which shrouds Olympic Village these days like a London fog.

Some watchful experts, however, aren't so convinced. Former Sydney United coach Tony Vrzina is one of the many astonished at the results.

"They've lost lots of good players and I can understand them losing, but not by three or four goals every week," says Vrzina. "At this level you should be able to organise a team able to put up a fight."

Whilst coach Drago Sekularac still commands respect, there is a growing number of fans on the terraces looking towards Brunswick and marvelling at what a breath of enthusiasm and confidence can do for flagging morale.

Losing out: Michael Michalakopoulos with Eagle Nick Orlic.

Meacock injury hits Strikers

– Brisbane by Glenn Davis –

BRISBANE Strikers have suffered a major injury blow to its Top Six aspirations with key striker Kevin Meacock due to undergo knee surgery.

Meacock was an integral part of the Strikers' revival from an early season form slump when he notched five goals in just seven CCSL games.

Meacock has been missing from the Strikers' line-up for the past few matches and the exploratory surgery is expected to sideline him for a further month.

However, Meacock's loss has been offset by the recent return of former Kiwi international Alun Evans and defender Stein Grodum.

Evans spent the Christmas period recuperating in his homeland after surgery to remove floating bone from his left ankle while Grodum has made a remarkable recovery from a dislocated shoulder.

Grodum was expected to be sidelined for six weeks but was back training in half the time.

Meanwhile, the Brisbane camp is riding high following their stunning 2-0 win against Marconi on Australia Day.

The crowd, in excess of 4,000, was a ground record this season and Strikers' officials are quietly hopeful of another record gate in their next home match against league leaders Melbourne Knights.

The Strikers have won their last five matches at home and haven't conceded a goal in their last three appearances.

Brisbane Strkers in action.

Coveny brings Wolves relief

– Wollongong by Phil Murphy –

Vaughan Coveny was a very relieved young man when he signed with Wollongong City.

He became a very ecstatic young man when he scored the two goals which gave his new club a shock 2-0 win against Adelaide City recently.

Coveny left Melbourne Knights for Wollongong at a bargain price of $15,000 after spending most of the season in the youth team.

"I was desperate to get back into senior football again," he said.

"I had been getting plenty of goals in the Youth League but wasn't able to break back into the senior side.

"It was becoming really frustrating for me.

"When the chance came for a move I jumped at it.

"There were three other clubs interested but I liked the idea of moving to Wollongong."

Coveny had been able to check out the scene at Brandon Park last season when Wollongong brought him from New Zealand and were keen to sign him.

However, after he had also talked with Parramatta, the young Kiwi decided to join the Knights.

Regarded as a regular member of the New Zealand squad, Coveny won over the Wolves fans in his first full home outing.

After half a game against Brunswick after signing less than 24 hours earlier, Coveny hit home two brilliant goals in the opening 10 minutes against the Zebras.

He finds things just right in Wollongong. "It is very similar to Wellington (NZ), my home town," he said.

"I am sharing accommodation near the beach which is great and I have always admired the set-up at Brandon Park.

"The players are a good bunch but I can't understand why the team is near the bottom of the table."

Looking to the future, Coveny wants to re-establish himself as a regular goal-getter in the CCSL and hopefully be able to play overseas.

"I am confident of helping Wollongong become established in the middle of the table," he said.

"Hopefully I will then hold my place in the New Zealand squad and maybe one day pick up an overseas contract if the right break comes along."

Coveny was part of the New Zealand squad which played in the Oceania section of the World Cup last year. He made his debut for the All Whites during their warm up overseas tour. That was in Scotland against Celtic at Parkhead and the Kiwis won 1-0.

"That's a really good reason to remember your international debut," Coveny said.

Sweeper the next Ivanovic

– Melbourne BUSC by Con Stavros –

HE runs with the same jinking gait, he commands the defensive area with the same cool composure and he exudes a skill and drive that regularly turns simple defence into devastating attack. He even wears the same black and white stripes.

The comparisons between Brunswick sweeper Alex Kuzmanovic and Adelaide Socceroo Milan Ivanovic don't stop there either.

Both learned their trade with Radnicki Nis in Europe and both have a strikingly similar build and playing manner.

Despite having both played for the same club, Kuzmanovic, who is only 27, didn't meet Ivanovic until the Pumas' recent trip to Adelaide.

Already many pundits are tipping that Kuzmanovic may be set to follow the fairytale footsteps of Ivanovic into the international arena.

Despite the depth of talent in the sweeper's position at present, anyone seeing the skills of Kuzmanovic will instantly recognise the comparison with Ivanovic, and we all know how valuable a contributor the Adelaide sweeper has been to the Socceroos.

The emergence of Kuzmanovic is largely due to his regular appearances at sweeper under Ken Murphy. Earlier in the season, Kuzmanovic, like many Pumas, was playing everywhere but his natural position.

The Kuzmanovic profile is timely for the Pumas, with their other hot-shot star, Ransford Banini unlikely to play again this season.

Banini would probably be available late in the campaign if necessary following knee surgery, but the feeling around the Pumas camp is that he is best saved for next season.

The Pumas' new-found confidence has meant a sudden jump in expectations for next season and Murphy, currently enjoying a golden honeymoon period with the Pumas fans, is hard at work sowing the seeds for a new season already.

Orchestrating a no nonsense, press at all times defence, Murphy has worked hard at the mental discipline of the game.

In recent weeks Murphy has had acclaimed runner Herb Elliot speak to the team.

"He emphasised the need for self-motivation and the ability to achieve beyond anticipation," said Murphy.

"Players want to feel as though they are achieving something, they want to push themselves."

Backs to goal: Marconi's Geaorge Jolevski and Steve Corica rise to clear a free kick. The two will be in action at Brandon Park on Friday night, as Frank Arok's team takes on Wollongong City.

WEST ADELAIDE V ADELAIDE CITY

AT HINDMARSH STADIUM

LIKELY LINE-UPS – ROUND 19

	POY
1 PETER BLAZINCIC Goalkeeper	0
5 ROBERT HOOKER Defender	8
17 GREG MILLS Defender	0
15 FRANK TIBALDI Defender	0
8 RICHIE ALAGICH Midfielder	1
13 MARK BRAZZALE Midfielder	0
10 GUSTAVO CERRO Midfielder	10
4 CON KOKKINOPOLITIS Midfielder	0
11 STAN LAZARIDIS Midfielder	7
6 GEORGE SLIFKAS Midfielder	5
12 RAYMOND BLAIR Striker	6
14 GREG BROWN Striker	2
16 JIM KERAMIDAS Striker	1
7 JIMMY TSEKINIS Striker	0
2 LEMMY VATSILAS Striker	0
3 GEORGE HANIOTIS Defender	3
9 PABLO CARDOZO Striker	4
18 SCOTT MORRISON	0
20 TONY GIANNASCA Goalkeeper	0

ABSW PREDICTS

(60) Greg Blake: Zebras
(54) Alistair Russell: Zebras
(56) Con Stavros: Draw
(51) Anthony Raineri: Zebras
(61) Roger Sleeman: Draw
(54) Steve Copping: Zebras

Derby clash: West's Stan Lazaridis and City's Carl Veart.

	POY
1 ROBERT ZABICA Goalkeeper	3
4 MILAN IVANOVIC Defender	12
2 DANIEL SABATINO Defender	0
17 JOEL MARINO Defender	0
14 PAUL SHILLABEER Defender	2
5 ALEXANDER TOBIN Defender	5
3 TONY VIDMAR Defender	2
15 BRAD HASSELL Mlidfield	3
11 GORAN LOZANOVSKI Midfielder	10
12 SERGIO MELTA Midfielder	8
6 CARLO TALLADIRA Midfielder	0
9 MICHAEL REDA Midfielder	0
JOSEPH BARBARO Striker	0
10 STEPHEN MAXWELL Striker	0
7 DAMIAN MORI Striker	11
13 JOSEPH MULLEN Striker	2
8 CARL VEART Striker	3
16 **JAMIE CARRENO**	0
18 RENATO MUSOLINO 0	
JAMIE PERIN	0

MELBOURNE BUSC V MORWELL FALCONS

AT MELB CROATIAN SPORTS CENTRE

LIKELY LINE-UPS – ROUND 19

	POY
20 ROBERT BRIAN Goalkeeper	0
1 JIM KOURTIS Goalkeeper	6
15 ROBERT TOMBOLATO Defender	6
5 PAUL DELLA ROCCA Defender	0
4 ROBERT FERLA Defender	1
STEPHEN MARLEY Defender	0
10 RINO MINICHIELLO Midfielder	0
ROSS ALOISI	1
8 ARCHIE McGEACHY Midfielder	3
12 SEB EMMANUELLE Midfielder	3
7 JONATHAN PILLEMER Midfielder	2
9 SASHA BECVINOVSKI Striker	3
13 ANTHONY BUDINI Striker	0
6 RANSFORD BANINI Midfielder	6
2 ALEX KUZMANOVIC	4
18 STEPHEN SMITH Striker	0
11 ANDREW ZINNI Striker	4
14 GEORGE KARKALETSIS	6
IBRIO CAHUT	0
CARLOS RETRE	0
19 PAUL DONNELLY Defender	0

ABSW PREDICTS

Greg Blake: Pumas
Anthony Raineri: Draw
Alistair Russell: Falcons
Roger Sleeman: Falcons
Con Stavros: Draw
Steve Copping: Pumas

Any which way you can: Brunswick Pumas in action.

	POY
20 JASON DASTEY Goalkeeper	0
1 STEVE MAUTONE Goalkeeper	11
4 STEVE DOUGLAS Defender	9
13 JOE GAGETTI Defender	2
5 SHAUN PARTON Defender	4
2 GARRY UPTON Defender	0
7 SONNY SEVIN Midfielder	6
12 ANTHONY CASSAR Midfielder	5
15 MARC STERGIOPOULOS Midfielder	2
14 VASKO TRPCEVSKI Midfielder	2
8 JOHN WADDELL Midfielder	0
11 LACHLAN ARMSTRONG Striker	0
9 BRIAN BOTHWELL Striker	3
3 CLAUDIO CANOSA Striker	3
10 JOHN MARKOVSKI Striker	9
6 PAUL DONNELLY	2
16 ALEK DJORDJEVIC	0
17 CARLO VILLANI Striker	0
18 FREDDY KRUYS Midfielder	0
19 GEORGE HANNAH Defender	3

SOUTH MELBOURNE V PARRAMATTA EAGLES

AT MIDDLE PARK

LIKELY LINE-UPS – ROUND 19

	POY
1 DEAN ANASTASIADIS Goalkeeper	0
STEVE WARDLE Goalkeeper	0
4 MEHMET DURAKOVIC Defender	7
2 KEVIN MUSCAT Defender	4
LEIGH TSOUMERKAS Defender	0
IKE ALAGIOZIDIS Midfielder	0
14 ANGIE GOUTZIOULIS Midfielder	6
3 GARY HASLER Midfielder	0
12 MIKE VALKANIS	3
STEVE PANOPOULOS Midfielder	0
5 JASON POLAK Midfielder	14
13 PHIL STUBBINS Midfielder	1
8 STEVE TASIOS Midfielder	16
6 PAUL WADE Midfielder	11
11 FRANCIS AWARITEFE Striker	0
10 CON BOUTSIANIS Striker	5
7 PETER TSOLAKIS Striker	0
9 PAUL TRIMBOLI Striker	6
16 JOHN VERIKAKIS Striker	0
15 ALEX KIRATZOGLOU	0

ABSW PREDICTS

Greg Blake: Blues
Anthony Raineri: Blues
Alistair Russell: Blues
Roger Sleeman: Blues
Con Stavros: Blues
Steve Copping: Blues

Boot high: Parramatta Eagles' John Koch.

	POY
1 PETER GUNNING Goalkeeper	0
20 JASON HOLMES Goalkeeper	0
2 ADAM CIANTAR Defender	4
3 GLENN GWYNNE Defender	5
7 CRAIG MOFFITT Defender	2
17 TOM HAYTHORNWAITE Midfielder	3
18 LUPCO NAUMOVSKI Midfielder	3
5 JOHN KOCH Midfielder	3
15 ZOKI ADIOSKI Striker	0
16 ANDREW DOWLING Midfielder	0
14 JASON FALZON Midfielder	0
4 GERRY GOMEZ Midfielder	0
9 MARSHALL SOPER Striker	4
10 JOSEPH SPITERI Striker	10
12 GLENN SPROD Utility	0
13 WALTER ARDONE Midfielder	0
19 BRENDAN RENAUD Striker	3

SYDNEY UNITED V NEWCASTLE BREAKERS

AT SYDNEY CROATIAN SPORTS CENTRE

LIKELY LINE-UPS – ROUND 19

	POY
20 TONY FRANKEN Goalkeeper	0
1 ZELJKO KALAC Goalkeeper	3
21 JOHN PEROSH Goalkeeper	0
5 MARK BABIC Defender	0
3 VELIMIR KUPRESAK Defender	2
4 TONY POPOVIC Defender	8
2 ROBERT STANTON Defender	3
10 JOHN GIBSON Midfielder	2
9 ERIC HRISTODOULOU Midfielder	0
19 MIRKO JURILJ Midfielder	0
6 TOM MILICEVIC Midfielder	0
12 ANTE MORIC Midfielder	2
13 KLAUS OKON Midfielder	1
7 IVAN PETKOVIC Midfielder	8
14 MARIO JERMAN Striker	0
8 TONY KRSLOVIC Striker	6
16 MANIS LAMOND	5
15 ANTE MILICIC	3
18 MATTHEW ZEC	0
11 DAVID ZDRILIC	0

ABSW PREDICTS

Greg Blake: Crows
Alistair Russell: Crows
Con Stavros: Crows
Anthony Raineri: Breakers
Roger Sleeman: Crows
Steve Copping: Crows

Rod Brown: Sunday's clash is crucial for Newcastle.

	POY
TROY BELLAMY Goalkeeper	0
1 CLINT GOSLING Goalkeeper	2
6 GRAHAM JENNINGS Defender	2
2 RALPH MAIER Defender	0
5 MARK JONES Stopper	0
12 NEIL OWENS Sweeper	2
3 ANDREW ROBERTS Defender	0
4 DARREN STEWART Defender	3
MARK WILSON Defender	0
16 NICK MEREDITH Midfielder	9
7 BOB NAUMOV Midfielder	5
17 DARREN NORTHAM Midfielder	0
12 SCOTT WELLS Midfielder	0
14 HOWARD TREDINNIICK Midfielder	0
9 RODNEY BROWN Striker	2
11 DAVID LOWE Striker	2
8 JOHN McQUARRIE Striker	8
15 TROY HALPIN Striker	1
13 LAWRIE McKINNA Striker	0

WOLLONGONG CITY V MARCONI

AT BRANDON PARK

LIKELY LINE-UPS – ROUND 19

	POY
BRETT HUGHES Goalkeeper	8
SHAUN FREESTONE	2
4 STEPHEN KRISHNA Midfielder	0
MIKE GRBEVSKI Defender	0
8 STEVEN FORSHAW Defender	2
PAUL MCFADDEN Midfielder	0
MICHAEL O'SHEA Defender	4
CHARLIE YANKOS Defender	5
ANTHONY SURJAN Midfield	5
MARTIN BOURKE Midfield	1
MATTHEW HORSLEY Midfield	1
0 RICHARD LLOYD Midfield	2
7 PEDRO RICOY Midfield	3
3 DAVID THOMAS Midfield	0
SASHO DIMOSKI Striker	0
1 SCOTT OLLERENSHAW Striker	6
DALE WHITE Striker	0
2 VAUGHAN COVENY Striker	4
9 ANTE ZIZIC	0
6 STUART McLAREN	1
5 IAN MORRIS	0

ABSW PREDICTS

Greg Blake: Marconi
Alistair Russell: Draw
Con Stavros: Marconi
Anthony Raineri: Marconi
Roger Sleeman: Marconi
Steve Copping: Marconi

Head first: Wollongong's Matt Horsley.

	POY
1 MARK SCHWARZER Goalkeeper	2
TONY KOSTADINOVSKI Goalkeeper	0
3 JP DE MARIGNY Defender	4
2 GEORGE JOLEVSKI Defender	5
14GARY VAN EGMOND Defender	0
4 MATTHEW BINGLEY Midfielder	13
10 STEVE CORICA Midfielder	24
5 IAN GRAY Midfielder	4
11 ANDREW HARPER Midfielder	0
12 ANDREA ICARDI Midfielder	1
6 BLAGOJA KULESKI Midfielder	1
FABIO MACOLINO Midfielder	0
15 TOMMY McCULLOCH Midfielder	0
MICHAEL SMITH Midfielder	0
13 UFUK TALAY Midfielder	3
JONATHAN ANGELUCCI Striker	0
7 GLENN JOHNSON Striker	3
9 KIMON TALIADOROS Striker	1
19 DARREN IOCCA	0

SYDNEY OLYMPIC V HEIDELBERG UNITED

AT LEICHHARDT OVAL

LIKELY LINE-UPS – ROUND 19

	POY
1 MICHAEL GIBSON Goalkeeper	4
20 GARY MEIER Goalkeeper	0
ANDREW BERNAL Defender	0
3 ELIAS AUGERINOS Defender	4
2 DAVID BARRETT Defender	10
14 JOSE MENDES Defender	0
BRAD MALONEY Midfielder	0
5 GEORGE SORRAS Defender	2
13 TONY SPYRIDAKOS Defender	0
4 ROBERT IRONSIDE Midfielder	0
6 ANGELO PETRATOS Midfielder	0
8 BRANKO MILOSEVIC Midfielder	7
12 PETER TSEKENIS Midfielder	1
7 JOE CALETA Striker	5
10 KRIS TRAJANOVSKI Striker	8
ABBAS SAAD Midfielder	0
AYTEK GENC Midfielder	0
9 IVAN KELIC Striker	6
NORMAN TOME Utility	4

ABSW PREDICTS

Greg Blake: Olympic	**Anthony Raineri:** Olympic
Alistair Russell: Olympic	**Roger Sleeman:** Olympic
Con Stavros: Olympic	**Steve Copping:** Olympic

Sydney Olympic must regain lost pride against Heidelberg.

	POY
1 M CHATZITRIFONOS Goalkeeper	5
4 DOUG HODGSON Defender	1
3 ALAN SCOTT Defender	0
2 GARY BRATTEN Midfielder	0
7 BRIAN MACNICOL Midfielder	6
12 THEO SELEMIDIS Defender	0
11 NEMANJA OBRADOVIC Midfielder	1
RICHARD WATSON	0
13 PETER TIKTIKAKIS Midfielder	1
9 DANNY GNJIDIC Striker	0
10 M MICHALAKOPOULOS Striker	0
5 JOE PALATSIDES Striker	0
15 ANDREW VLAHOS Striker	0
14 GEORGE GEORGIADIS Utility	2
6 GORAN NEGIC Midfielder	3
16 MICHAEL PANOPOULOS	0
17 TOM KARAPATSOS	0
20 CON KARANIKOLOS Goalkeeper	0
5 STEVE IOSFIDES	1
18 **LEE TSOUMERKAS**	0
19 RICHARD WATSON	0

BRISBANE STRIKERS V MELB KNIGHTS

AT PERRY PARK

LIKELY LINE-UPS – ROUND 19

	POY
1 CLINT BOLTON Goalkeeper	0
20 GRAHAM ROSS Goalkeeper	0
3 ALUN EVANS Defender	1
18 STEIN GRODUM Defender	0
5 STEVEN JACKSON Sweeper	3
4 ALAN HUNTER Defender	15
8 ANDREW STOWELL Defender	2
14 SEAN CRANNEY Midfield	4
11 TROY CRANNEY Midfield	15
17 BRADLEY DITTON Midfield	0
16 KEVIN MEACOCK Midfielder	5
7 GARY PHILLIPS Midfielder	2
2 FRANK PIMBLETT Midfield	1
15 CRAIG WILLIAMS Midfield	0
10 DANIEL WRIGHT Midfielder	4
6 DARREN HILLIER Striker	0
9 ANDREW LEES Striker	0
12 CHRIS SLATER Striker	2

ABSW PREDICTS

Greg Blake: Knights	**Anthony Raineri:** Strikers
Alistair Russell: Draw	**Roger Sleeman:** Draw
Con Stavros: Knights	**Steve Copping:** Draw

In goal: Melbourne Knights' David Miller.

	POY
20 FRANK JURIC Goalkeeper	0
1 DAVID MILLER Goalkeeper	3
3 FAUSTO DE AMICIS Defender	6
6 ANDREW MARTH Defender	14
5 VLADO VANIS Defender	0
18 JOSIP BISKIC Midfielder	19
11 VINKO BULJUBASIC Midfielder	0
12 STEVE HORVAT Midfielder	2
14 KRUNOSLAV RAZOV Midfielder	0
2 MARK TALAJIC Midfielder	0
7 ZORAN TRAJCEVSKI Midfielder	4
8 DAMIAN VOJTEK Midfielder	1
13 ADRIAN CERVINSKI Striker	2
19 OLIVER PONDELJAK Striker	3
9 MARK VIDUKA Striker	16
10 MARK SILIC Striker	5
4 DAVID CERVINSKI	
15 ZORAN MARKOVSKI	
16 ANTE JURIC	0

NORTHERN DIVISION WITH PETER KONSTO

✣ RESULTS ✣

MID-WEEK RESULTS

Wollongong City (Morris 73, 77) 2 Parramatta Eagles 0, Queensland Academy (Evans 30) 1 Marconi Fairfield (Casserley 39) 1, AIS (Simunic 33) 1 Parramatta Colts (Lester 77) 1, ACT Academy (Castro 11, Nelson 89) 2 Sydney Olympic Rd 25 (Navarette 17, Nikas 73) 2, Sydney Olympic Colts v Sydney Olympic to be played on 16.2.94, Marconi Academy bye, Sydney United bye.

ROUND 18 SUNDAY

Marconi Fairfield (Holdsworth 48) 1 Sydney Olympic (og 16, Buonavoglia 18) 2, Parramatta Colts 0 Sydney United (Islas 45, Plesa 51, Graham 78, Gibson 86) 4, AIS 0 Queensland Academy (Collins 9) 1, Parramatta Eagles (Nielson 40, Sprod 56, Meilak 84) 3 Marconi Academy (Bosevski 32, 60, Escobar 80) 3, Sydney Olympic Colts (Krithinakis 55, Bakafoukoas 82, Battisti 90) 3 Wollongong City (Callahan 28, Luff 77) 2, ACT Academy (Conlon 84) 1 Newcastle BHP 3 (Snarpe 47, Dewhurst 66, James 72) 3.

✣ FIXTURES ✣

FRI Wollongong City v Marconi Fairfield 5.30pm Brandon Park
SAT QAS v Parramatta Colts 4.30pm Perry Park
SAT Syd Olympic Colts v Marconi Academy 5.30pm Leichhardt Oval
SUN Sydney United v Newcastle BHP 4.30pm Croatian Spts Cen
SUN Sydney Olympic v AIS 4.30pm Leichhardt Oval
27/2 ACT Academy v Parramatta Eagles 5pm AIS Athletics Field

✣ TABLES ✣

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sydney United	15	12	1	2	38	10	37
Sydney Olympic	15	9	4	2	32	21	31
Newcastle BHP	14	6	3	5	27	22	21
Wollongong City	14	5	4	5	24	21	19
Parra Eagles	15	5	4	6	27	25	19
QAS	14	5	3	6	22	20	18
Syd Olympic Colts	14	5	3	6	23	25	18
Marconi Fairfield	16	5	3	8	27	43	18
AIS	11	5	2	4	34	15	17
Marconi Academy	14	5	2	7	28	32	17
Parramatta Colts	14	4	2	8	15	32	14
ACT IS	14	2	3	9	15	46	9

LEADING GOALSCORERS

11 Zlatko Mihljovic (Marconi Fairfield)
10 Zeljko Babic (Sydney United)
9 Mario Jermen (Sydney United)
8 Colin Luff (Wollongong City)
8 Jeromy Harris (Marconi Academy)
8 Darren Iocca (Marconi Fairfield)
7 Peter Vezos (Sydney Olympic Colts)
7 Evangelos Petratos (Syd Olympic)
7 Harry James (Newcastle BHP)
6 Gianpaulo Buonavoglia (Syd Olympic)
5 Lawrie McKinna (Newcastle BHP)
5 Daniel Escobar (Marconi Academy)
5 Ian Morris (Wollongong City)
5 Nick Bosevski (Marconi Academy)
5 Derek Poimer (Sydney Olympic)
5 Malcolm Meilak (Parra Eagles)
5 Josip Skoko (AIS)
5 Stuart McLaren (Wollongong City)

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

HULISI ORHAN

(PARRAMATTA EAGLES COLTS)

DATE OF BIRTH: 4.6.77
PREVIOUS CLUB/S: Eastern Suburbs
POSITION: Right back
AGE STARTED PLAYING: Eight, with Brothers Soccer Club
MOST ADMIRED OVERSEAS PLAYER/S: Alan Shearer, Ryan Giggs
MOST ADMIRED LOCAL PLAYER/S: Joe Watson, Alex Robertson, Aytek Genc
BIGGEST INFLUENCES: Joe Watson, father
GREATEST SKILL: Giving 100% every game
WHAT SKILL DO YOU NEED WORK ON? I want to improve my general skill on the ball
FAVOURITE FOOD: Turkish pizza
AMBITION: To play professional soccer in England
HOBBIES: Going to the movies, playing the guitar

Orhan originally started playing as a striker and then a sweeper. He was then moved to midfield, and upon arrival at Parramatta, coach Tony Henderson has been utilizing him at right back.

SPOTLIGHT GAME

PARRAMATTA EAGLES 3
MARCONI ACADEMY 3

BY SARAH CLARRY

The Marconi Academy continued their recent improvement with a spirited 3-3 draw against Parramatta on Sunday.

It was an entertaining and hard-fought tussle between two sides who appear to have a lot of potential in their collective ranks.

Neither team got their nose in front for more than a few minutes throughout the game and it was Parramatta who twice had to come back from behind.

Undoubtedly the highlights of the match were the goals, most of which were of an exceptional standard.

Parramatta started well and had two clear chances in the first half hour before Marconi's Nick Bosevski scored against the run of play.

Bosevski's shot wasn't a particularly strong one, and one Parramatta 'keeper Jason Holmes should have taken easily, but it slipped through his hands and dribbled agonisingly over the line.

Parramatta replied quickly with a volley from Stuart Nielsen, then in the second half went ahead for the first time through a fierce strike from Glen Sprod after a well co-ordinated lead-up down the left flank.

But Bosevski and his striking partner Daniel Escobar were like a pair of loose cannons as far as the Parramatta defenders were concerned and they teamed up on the hour when Escobar sent a cross in for Bosevski who hit it on the turn to equalise.

Marconi found the net again, however, made a basic mistake by taking a direct free kick when referee Brett Hugo had ordered an indirect.

With ten minutes to go it was Escobar who gave the visitors the scent of a win with what was the goal of the game.

He supplied the perfect finish to the groundwork that he, Bosevski and substitute Carlos Gonzales put in.

Though Parramatta coach Greg Ankudinoff claimed his side threw the game away overall, they salvaged a vital draw through Malcolm Meilak with eight minutes remaining.

"There was a lot of action - real end-to-end stuff," Ankudinoff said.

"The first goal was soft but I'm happy to get one point because it means we can still make the top four."

Ankudinoff named David Huxley as Parramatta's best.

PARRAMATTA EAGLES: Holmes, Nielsen (Seniuk 62), Huxley, Smithwick, Dowling, Cheeseman, Sprod, Meilak, Haythornethwaite, Morgan, Melia (Giometti 83).

MARCONI ACADEMY: Pogliacomi, Duric, Riley, Gomez, Bocevski, Escobar, Harris, McDonald, Pollari, Kladis, Gajic, Mezzaasalma ht sub.

SCORERS: Nielsen 39m, Sprod 55m, Mielak 82m for Parramatta. Bocevski 32m, 60m, Escobar 80m for Marconi.

YELLOW CARDS: Pollari 27m, Gomez 49m for Marconi. Nielsen 62m, Morgan 81m for Parramatta.

REFEREE: B Hugo.

MAN OF THE MATCH: Daniel Escobar.

MID-WEEK ROUND-UP

BY PETER KONSTO

Wollongong City moved up the Coca-Cola Youth Soccer League Northern Division table with a good 2-0 victory over the Parramatta Eagles at Brandon Park last Wednesday.

The Wolves left it late, with a double strike by Ian Morris doing the damage to the Eagles.

The Australian Institute of Sport had another one of those "the one that got away" games with a disappointing 1-1 draw against Parramatta Colts in Canberra.

Sydney Olympic dropped two vital points in their title chase against a committed ACT Academy team with their 2-2 draw in Canberra.

In the only other game played the Queensland Academy and Marconi Fairfield played out a 1-1 draw. Both Marconi Academy and Sydney United had byes.

ROUND 18 SUMMARY

BY PETER KONSTO

Sydney Olympic confirmed their second place position on the Youth League Northern Division table with a convincing 2-1 victory over Marconi-Fairfield at Marconi Stadium.

Olympic dominated the game right from the onset, however, couldn't convert their countless scoring opportunities because of the great work of Marconi goalkeeper, Tony Kostadinovski, between the posts.

Kostadinovski made at least a dozen good saves throughout the match particularly from one-on-ones from both Derek Poimer and the ever elusive John Buonavoglia.

However, there was nothing Kostadinovski could do against the opening two goals by Olympic.

The first was an own goal resulting from a Poimer cross which Matthew O'Shea headed into his own net in the 18th minute.

The second came just three minutes later courtesy of another one of those Buonavoglia "specials" with him beating two defenders in the box and firing a low left-foot shot into the corner of the goal in the 21st minute to take Olympic into the break with a two-goal advantage.

Marconi came out and hit back straight after half-time with a great goal by Mark Holdsworth in the 47th minute.

Olympic continued to dominate, with Poimer, Buonavoglia and Maurichio Navarrete being denied by Konstadinovski.

The AIS continued their bad run of late with a shock 1-0 home loss to the QAS.

The Queenslanders struck early when they hit the lead in the ninth minute through Stuart Collins. Collins ran almost the full length of one half before finally slipping the ball under the advancing AIS 'keeper, Danny Milosevic.

The Sydney Olympic Colts caused an upset with their 3-2 victory over their better fancied opponents, Wollongong City. The Wolves hit the lead thanks to a 28th minute strike by Matt Callaghan, and that is how the scores remained until after the break.

Anthony Krithinakis equalised for Olympic in the 55th minute, however, after some persistent work in front of goal, Colin Luff took the Wolves back into the lead in the 77th minute.

Olympic were able to seal the home victory when two defensive lapses cost Wollongong the full three points.

The equaliser came after Soc Bakasoukas stole the ball from Ben Willard in the 82nd minute and the winner was scored by substitute Paul Battisti with a volley after some good lead-up work by Norm Tome.

Steve Tolios in the Olympic goal again saved his team, making many outstanding saves throughout the entire game.

SOUTHERN DIVISION WITH ROY HAY

✣ RESULTS ✣

MID-WEEK

South Melbourne (Panopoulos 47, Carey 67, 71) 3 Doncaster Rovers 0, Melbourne Knights (Grganovic 87) 1 Heidelberg United 0, Preston 0 VIS (Lazarevski 30, Sterjovski 47, 85) 3, Springvale City (Spina 87) 1 Altona Gate (Velkovski 65, Bozinov 67, Dimovski 86) 3, Albion 1 (E Osman 19) 1 Sunshine George Cross (Georgakakis 82) 1, Bulleen (Siclari 18, Marino 36) 2 Morwell Falcons (Villani 56, Waddell 63, 66, Alesi 89) 4, North Geelong 0 Melbourne BUSC (Genovesi 21, 23, 38, 80), Della Rocca 57, Boschini 83, Sasso 86, Iauchone 87) 8.

Round 16

Wednesday 26, 1994

South Melbourne (Carey 2, Panopoulos) 3 Doncaster Rovers 0, Melbourne Knights (Grganovic) 1 Heidelberg United 0, Preston 0 Victorian Institute of Sport (Sterjovski 2, Lazarevski), Springvale City (Spina) 1, Altona Gate (Velkovski, Bozinov, Dimovski) 3, Albion (Osman) 1 Sunshine George Cross (Georgakakis) 1, Bulleen (Siclari, Marino) 2 Morwell Falcons (Waddell 2, Villani, Alesi) 4, North Geelong 0 Brunswick Pumas 8 (Genovesi 4, Sasso, Della Rocca, Iacuone, Buschini).

Round 18

Saturday 29, 1994

Morwell Falcons 0 South Melbourne (Mihaloglou) 1.

Sunday 30 January 1994. Doncaster Rovers 0 Brunswick Pumas 8 (Popovski 3, Minichiello 2, Nikolic, Sasso, Lacuone) Sunshine George Cross 0 Bulleen 3 (Prinsen, Bianco, Di Iorio) Altona Gate 2 Albion 0 (Bogdanovski 2) VIS 5 Sprinvale City 1 (Lazarevski 3 (Milenkovic) Sterjovski, Fehmi) Heidelberg United 3 Preston 2 (Nicolaidis, Tyrikos, (Angelovski og)Kollevris) Melbourne Knights 3 North Geelong 1 (Stolica, Jelincic, Kasun) (Trupkovic)

✣ LEADING ✣ GOALSCORERS

16 Michael Curcija	(Heidelberg United)
16 Theo Mihaloglou	(South Melbourne)
16 Nick Lazarevski	(VIS)
15 Ivan Skoko	(North Geelong)
13 Carlo Villani	(Morwell Falcons)
12 Daniel Genovese	(Brunswick Pumas)
12 Vaughan Coveney	(Melbourne Knights)
10 Steve Bogdanovski	(Altona Gate)
9 Steve Panopoulos	(South Melbourne)
9Joe Tricarico	(VIS)

✣ TABLE ✣

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Melb	18	14	3	1	54	16	45
VIS	18	14	0	4	52	23	42
Brunswick	18	12	1	5	59	18	37
Heidelberg	18	12	1	5	45	22	37
Morwell Fal	18	9	1	8	48	31	28
Melb Knights	18	8	4	6	36	31	28
Bulleen	17	6	6	5	25	22	24
Altona Gate	18	8	0	10	36	43	24
Preston	18	5	5	8	28	35	20
North Geelong	18	6	2	10	31	52	20
Springvale City	18	5	2	11	21	57	17
Albion	18	4	2	12	26	49	14
Sunshine GC	18	3	4	11	27	54	13
Doncaster R	17	2	3	12	18	53	9

✣ FIXTURES ✣

Round 3 Catch-up game

Wednesday February 2

Bulleen v Doncaster Rovers (6pm, Veneto Club).

Friday February 4

Springvale City v Heidelberg United (4pm, Ross Reserve)

Sunday February 5

South Melbourne v Sunshine George Cross (4pm, Middle Park)

Preston v Melbourne Knights (4pm, Connor Reserve)

Albion v VIS (4pm, Selwyn Park)

Bulleen v Altona Gate (4pm, Veneto Club)

North Geelong v Doncaster Rovers (4pm, Elcho Park)

Sunday February 6

Brunswick Pumas v Morwell Falcons (4pm, Somers Street)

✣ ROUND-UP MATCHES ✣

SPOTLIGHT GAME

ROUND-UP

In a full round of matches played on the Australia Day holiday, South Melbourne had a comfortable 3-0 win at home against Doncaster Rovers, with Evan Carey scoring twice and Steve Panopoulos once. Damir Grganovic got the only goal after 87 minutes, as the Melbourne Knights scraped in against Heidelberg United.

Two Preston players did the damage for the Victorian Institute of Sport against their old club, with Chris Sterjovski notching two more goals and Nick Lazarevski continuing his scoring run.

Altona Gate overcame Springvale City by three goals to one, while Albion and Sunshine George Cross shared the points at Selwyn Park in a 1-1 draw. John Waddell's two goals were the difference between the teams, as Falcons won 4-2. The Brunswick Pumas ran riot against North Geelong at Elcho Park and Daniel Genovese finally got the goals his outfield play had been foreshadowing in recent weeks. He scored four in an 8-0 victory.

On Saturday in Round 18, South Melbourne got home against the Falcons in the Latrobe Valley courtesy of a Theo Mihaloglou goal.

Brunswick Pumas scored eight goals without reply. This time the victim was Doncaster Rovers.

Former VIS star Robert Popovski got a hat-trick and Rino Minichiello scored two, the others being spread around.

Bulleen scored three times in the second half to down Sunshine George Cross at Chaplin Reserve. Jamie Prinsen, Lewis Bianco and Peter Di Iorio were on target.

Steve Bogdanovski scored two excellent goals, one in each half, to give Altona Gate a 2-0 win over Albion, while in the early match at Paisley Reserve, Nick Lazarevski was the destroyer for the VIS, scoring his third hat-trick in recent matches.

Tony Sterjovski and Ozan Fehmi got the others and Sasha Milenkovic scored a penalty for Springvale.

Heidelberg United kept up its top four challenge with a 3-2 win over Preston.

It was 2-2 with a minute to play when Taki Nicolaidis got the winner.

An ugly incident in the Heidelberg goalmouth followed which resulted in a couple of red cards, but that was out of keeping with the rest of the match.

PREVIEW OF ROUND 19

The last of the catch-up games from Round Three will be played tomorrow at the Veneto Club when Bulleen should beat Doncaster Rovers. The match is at 6pm.

On Friday in Round 19, Springvale City will do well to hold Heidelberg United at Ross Reserve on Saturday. Preston and the Melbourne Knights look very evenly matched, as do Bulleen and Altona gate. The VIS should win at Albion and home advantage may see North Geelong through against Doncaster Rovers. On Sunday there will be a great battle at Somers Street between the Brunswick Pumas and Morwell Falcons, and this may be a high-scoring draw.

SPOTLIGHT MATCH

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 3
NORTH GEELONG 1

Melbourne Knights celebrated its fortieth anniversary with a 3-1 win over North Geelong in the Croatian derby at Somers Street.

Steve Kasun cut the North defence apart down the left wing all day and it was his cross after three minutes that gave Luciano Stolica the opening to put the Knights ahead.

North stormed back, hitting the post and forcing Frank Juric to make a number of saves.

When Mijo Trupkovic's outrageous overhead shot was flying into the top corner, however, Juric damaged his knee on his own goalpost as he tried to save. Vilson Knezevic took over.

John Jelincic added a second goal for the Knights from a Steve Spirovski cross and then Kasun got free again on the left, scoring from a narrow angle. In the last minute Mijo Trupkovic made a surging run at the Knights' defence only to be brought down outside the penalty area. Getting up, he sent the resultant free kick around the wall and into the top corner for a fine goal.

Krunoslav Razov and Bozo Mikulic played well in midfield for the Knights, while North were well served by Troy Hardy, Goran and Ante Skoko and Trupkovic.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK

TOM RAJKOVSKI

Name: Tom Rajkovski
Date of birth: 30th October 1976
Present club: Preston
Position: Goalkeeper
Honours: Victoria Under 12, 13 and 15
Greatest influence: My dad, for encouraging me to start soccer.
Greatest skill: Quick reflexes.
What do you need to work on?: Crosses and high balls.
Ambition: To play for my country to play overseas.
Coaching tip: Keep practising and listen to what your coach tells you.

Tom Rajkovski has been a Preston boy since he started soccer and played with the Victorian team at successive national championships. Now establishing himself as the 'keeper for Preston in the NYL, he has performed well behind a defence which often leaves him to deal with breakaway strikers. Brave and mobile, his quick reflexes often get his team out of trouble.

PLAYERS' PLAYER OF THE YEAR

All players will take part in a vote for the National Youth League Players' Player of the Year and Goalkeeper of the Year.

Voting papers will be distributed before the last round of matches. Get to know your opponents, so you know whom to vote for at the end of the year.

REMINDER TO CLUBS AND REFEREES

Would all clubs and referees ensure that they phone results and scorers for both teams to Roy Hay on 052-435966 on Sundays so that the information can be supplied to the press, radio and TV as soon as possible.

I also need the information for the NYL 0055 number, so don't forget or your players and supporters will be upset. Please feel free to make copies of this newsletter and distribute it to your players and supporters.

THE GOOD OIL... THE GOOD OIL...

WITH JOHN ECONOMOS

WEMBLEY

SBS-TV has re-commenced screening its annual programme "Road To Wembley" culminating in the F.A .Cup Final set down for May 14th.

SBS again will be televising the Cup Final live across the nation.

"Road To Wembley" charts the course of English club teams as they struggle to reach the final for the prestigious FA Cup sponsored for the second year by Coca Cola.

Each week, the SBS programme features a main match with highlights of other important clashes.

"Road To Wembley" is an 18-part series that the network screens each Saturday afternoon between 4.30pm and 5.30pm.

Manchester United, who seem to be running away with the League championship, is well on the way to achieving the magic "double", a rare feat in English football.

Tottenham Hotspur (1961) and Arsenal (1971) are the only two clubs to have ever nailed down the "double".

The FA Cup has been historically riddled with huge upsets as smaller teams have knocked out their more illustrious Premier League opponents.

This time round, the mighty Merseyside teams of Liverpool and Everton have already been knocked out of the Cup.

Both Everton and Liverpool have won the treasured Cup recently.

Liverpool met their "Waterloo" last week when Bristol City defeated them 1-0 in a third-round replay.

"Road To Wembley" will again be presented by SBS's presenter, Les Murray.

Les Murray

▼▼▼

WHO'S GAMBLING?

A cocky and somewhat overweight CCSL striker, in a recent visit to Adelaide's Casino, returned home much 'lighter' than when he departed Sydney.The said striker confidently marched into the casino after his team's league clash with Adelaide City, ready to make a killing. In the first half hour everything seemed to be going according to plan.The young striker, displaying devastating form at the tables, very quickly hit the front by some $200. But alas, instead of "locking-up the game", the by now out of control striker started shooting for the moon.

Final scoreline was Sydney striker 0 - Casino $700.

▼▼▼

CUP FACTS

Some facts about the English FA Cup.

1.The Cup is open to all clubs in England that are affiliated with the Football Association.

2.Over 6000 teams are involved, including factory sides as well as amateur clubs which start the competition with the Premier League and Division One teams entering the challenge after the third round.

3. The FA Cup is the world's oldest soccer competition.

4. Millions of viewers in over 70 countries around the globe will watch the FA Cup Final at Wembley Stadium on May 14th.

5. The first FA Cup Final was played back in 1872.

6. In its 122-year history, seven Second Division sides have caused major upheavals by winning the Cup Final against their more illustrious Premier League opponents.

The once mighty Liverpool won the Cup three times in the past decade.

Living legend Kenny Dalglish won the Cup for Liverpool in his first season as manager of the Reds back in 1986, defeating their Merseyside neighbours, Everton.

Dalglish narrowly missed achieving the double when he managed to finish second in the League the same year.

Kenny Dalglish

▼▼▼

CLASHES

Personality-clashes between some CCSL coaches and players, over recent weeks have become uncharacteristically common.

First we had the episode between Sydney Olympic's boss, Berti Mariani and sweeper, Tony Spyridakos, now solved.

This was followed by the clash between Marconi's coach, Frank Arok and Italian imported midfielder, Ermanno Pelucchi, which unfortunately ended unresolved with Pelucchi asking for a transfer.

Last week a further personality clash flared up between Newcastle's dynamic striker, Warren Spink and coach Jim Foley.

Now a fourth incident is brewing,again with Newcastle.

Jim Foley

▼▼▼

MALONEY STAYS

BRAD MALONEY, Sydney Olympic's tenacious midfielder, was rumoured late last week to be about to be sold overseas (possibly to Holland) for a figure of around $250,000.

But Olympic's coach Berti Mariani strongly denied such wild speculation.

"Brad is going nowhere for the time being. Any talk about him leaving Olympic is just that..talk," Mariani assured us.

Brad Maloney

▼▼▼

BERNAL BACK

ANDREW BERNAL, Sydney Olympic's captain and international defender, is at last about to make his long-awaited comeback this Sunday against Heidelberg United.

Bernal, who in the past 18 months has had no less than four operations on the same knee, is keener than ever to get back on the pitch.

Another comeback this weekend by an Olympic player is expected from pacey left midfielder, Joe Caleta.

Caleta, the club's second top goalscorer with five goals, has missed the last four matches with hamstring problems to his right leg.

Andrew Bernal

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MIKE'S BABY

MIKE GIBSON, Olympic's former international goalkeeper, became a father for the second time when his wife Debbie presented him with a daughter.

The new addition is the second child in the Gibson family.

Mike Gibson

▼▼▼

POLITICS

REMO NOGARROTTO, Marconi's former chairman, is hotly tipped to become a Federal Liberal Senator within the next two weeks.

Remo has some very powerful backing from the former NSW Premier, Mr Nick Greiner and the very high-profile Ms Bronwyn Bishop.

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KICK-OFF

MARCONI's special promotion of their 'Champions' Cup' match against the South Korean club champions, Il Haw on Wednesday week, has attracted some criticism for its very early 6pm kick-off. Marconi's Football Administrator, Mr Frank Labbozetta, told Good Oil: "The early kick-off was completely unavoidable because Korean television is beaming the match back to Seoul live in prime time.

Hunter in for the kill

Bruce Stowell

BY ROGER SLEEMAN

ALAN Hunter, like a good wine, just keeps on maturing.

He has been outstanding for the Strikers this season and is largely responsible for the low 16 goals-against statistic.

"I have a very good understanding with Steve Jackson at the back which probably emanates from our years together in junior football," says Hunter.

"Unfortunately, against Adelaide City, our goals-against record took a hammering, but after losing only our first match in nine, we didn't feel the bubble had burst."

After a career spanning over 250 CCSL appearances, and six games in Socceroo colours, Alan Hunter is carefully considering his career options.

"I would like to think I can compete at CCSL level for a couple of seasons at least, but that all depends on injuries and I've never exactly shunned body contact during my career which isn't a good prescription for longevity in the game."

Last season in the State League, Hunter coached North Brisbane to a Cup victory, but at the moment he has no great aspirations to seek a long-term future in coaching.

"I would certainly like to become involved in the development of young players, but I also see a major priority in the marketing of our game which is often neglected by the administrators," says Hunter.

"All summer we witness the fabulous promotion of tennis and cricket while our game just sits in the shadows and scarcely makes any progress."

"Until our players are promoted properly, and become household names in Australian sport, you can't provide a career path for players in the game."

After his side's 3-0 loss to Adelaide City, Bruce Stowell was philosophical, yet realistic, about the task which confronts the Strikers in the next few weeks if they are to be seriously considered as Top Six candidates.

"It was, after all, our first loss in nine matches but if the chances we had in the first half had been capitalised on, Adelaide City may have been singing a different tune at the end of the 90 minutes," says Stowell.

"One thing is for certain, we won't be allowing players in the next few weeks the sort of freedom that Damien Mori was given in this match.

"There's no point blaming individual players for these defensive lapses, because the players must work for each other and not leave the responsibility to others to pick up opponents in our defensive third."

"Admittedly, it doesn't help the team performance when you realise we were at Brisbane airport at 6.15am on Sunday morning, and didn't arrive in our Adelaide motel until 12.15pm, but I suppose this is just part of playing in the CCSL."

On the prowl: veteran Alan Hunter is in great form for Brisbane Strikers.

WORLD RESULTS & TABLES

ENGLAND: PREMIER LEAGUE

West Ham 3 (Allen 37th minute, Jones 46th, Morley 84th) Norwich 3 (Sutton 5th, 56th, Fox 79th). Halftime 1-1. Attendance: 20,738.

ENGLISH FA CUP
— January 25 —

Liverpool 0 Bristol City 1 (Tinnion 66th minute).
Attendance 36,720.
(Bristol City are away to Stockport City in the fourth round.)

ENGLAND
— January 25 —

Division Three

Carlisle .....1 Bury 2
Chesterfield ....1 Doncaster.....1
Darlington .....0 Wigan 0
Wycombe .....1 Mansfield.....0

SCOTLAND
— January 25 —

Premier Division

Motherwell.....3 Raith 1
St Johnstone....1 Dundee UTD...1

Division One

Dunfermline ...0 Airdrieonians.0
St Mirren .....3 Ayr 1

Division Two

Albion .....3 Montrose.....4
East Fife.....1 Stranraer 1
Stenhousemuir 1 Meadowbank ..1

FA CUP FOURTH ROUND

Cardiff.....1 Man City 0
Charlton .....0 Blackburn 0
(replay February 8)
Chelsea .....1 Sheffield Wed.1
(replay February 9)
Grimsby.....1 Aston Villa 2
Ipswich.....3 Tottenham 0
Kidderminster.1 Preston 0
Newcastle.....1 Luton.....1
(replay February 8)
Notts County ...1 West Ham 1
(replay February 9)
Oldham.....0 Stoke 0
(replay February 9)
Oxford .....2 Leeds 2
(replay February 9)
Plymouth .....2 Barnsley.....2
(replay February 9)
Port Vale.....0 Wolverhampton.....2
Stockport .....p Bristol City ....p
(New date: Wednesday, February 9)
Wimbledon .....2 Sunderland 1
Norwich v Manchester United
Bolton v Arsenal (played last night)

League Cup quarter-final round replay

Tranmere .....2 NottForest 0
(Tranmere meet Aston Villa in the semi final. First-leg February 16, second leg February 22)

DIVISION ONE

Derby.....1 Watford 2

DIVISION TWO

Barnet.....0 Brentford.....0
Brighton .....3 Blackpool.....2
Bristol Rovers..0 Huddersfield ..0
Burnley.....3 Cambridge 0
Exeter .....0 Bournemouth .2
Leyton Orient..3 Hull.....1
York .....1 Bradford 1
Swansea .....1 Hartlepool.....1

DIVISION THREE

Bury .....0 Scarborough ...2
Colchester .....1 Gillingham 2
Crewe .....0 Chesterfield ...1
Darlington .....2 Scunthorpe.....1
Lincoln .....1 Rochdale 1
Mansfield .....2 Wigan 3
Northampton...0 Doncaster.....0
Shrewsbury .....1 Wycombe 0
Torquay .....1 Chester 3
Walsall.....0 Carlisle 1

GM VAUXHALL CONFERENCE LEAGUE

Bromsgrove.....3 Macclesfield ...0
D'ham/R' .....3 Altr 0
Dover.....2 Stafford 0
Merthyr Tydfil 3 Gateshead.....0
Runcorn.....1 Witton 0
Telford.....4 Slough 1
Welling.....0 Halifax.....2
Woking.....1 Southport.....0
Yeovil.....1 Kettering 0

NORTHERN PREMIER LEAGUE

Accrington .....2 Knowsley 1
Barrow.....1 Frickley 3
Boston .....6 Colwyn Bay 1
Chorley.....1 Matlock.....2

Peter Schmeichel: kept a clean sheet against Norwich City.

Emley .....2 Bishop land....2
Hyde.....1 Horwich 1
Leek.....2 Morecambe.....0
Whitley Bay.....1 Droylsden 1
Winsford.....p Buxton.....p

DIADORA LEAGUE

Aylesbury.....3 Wokingham....0
Basingstoke .....1 Marlow 3
Carshalton .....4 Wivenhoe.....3
Dorking .....0 Bromley.....3
Dulwich.....0 Hendon.....1
Grays .....0 Chesham 2

SCOTTISH FA CUP THIRD ROUND

Airdrieonians..1 Dunfermline ..1
Alloa.....p Ross County ...p
Arbroath .....2 Dundee UTD...3
Clydebank .....1 Dundee 1
East Stirling ....p Aberdeen .....p
Hibernian .....2 Clyde 1
Kilmarnock.....2 Ayr 1
Morton.....2 Cowdenbeath..2
Motherwell.....1 Celtic.....0
Partick.....0 Hearts.....1
Raith .....2 Brechin.....0
Rangers.....4 Dumbarton.....1
St Johnstone....2 Hamilton 0
St Mirren .....2 Montrose.....0
Stirling.....1 Berwick 0
Stranraer .....2 Falkirk 1

SCOTTISH DIVISION TWO

Albion .....1 East Fife.....1
Queen's Park ...3 Meadowbank ..2
Stenhousemuir p Q South .....p

ENGLISH DIVISION ONE

Crystal P	26	15	4	7	45	30	49
Charlton	27	14	6	7	35	25	48
Millwall	27	13	8	6	37	28	47
Leicester	27	13	7	7	47	32	46
Tranmere	28	13	6	9	39	33	45
Nott Forest	26	12	8	6	41	30	44
Derby	27	13	3	11	43	41	42
Wolver	27	10	12	5	41	27	42
Stoke	27	12	6	9	37	39	42
Southend	28	12	4	12	44	39	40
Bolton	28	10	9	9	36	32	39
Bristol City	28	10	8	10	30	33	38
Portsmouth	27	9	10	8	31	34	37
Sunderland	27	11	4	12	29	34	37
Notts Co	27	11	3	13	38	47	36
Middles	26	8	10	8	34	28	34
Luton	26	9	5	12	32	34	32
Watford	28	8	7	13	42	54	31
Grimsby	26	6	12	8	31	30	30
Birmingh	28	7	7	14	29	43	28
West Brom	27	6	8	13	37	44	26
Oxford	28	6	8	14	32	50	26
Barnsley	27	6	7	14	31	45	25
Peterbor	25	5	8	12	22	31	23

ENGLISH DIVISION TWO

Reading	27	17	7	3	55	27	58
Bristol R	27	14	7	6	36	28	49
Plymouth	25	14	6	5	48	32	48
Stockport	24	14	5	5	42	22	47
Burnley	27	14	4	9	46	33	46
Brentford	28	12	10	6	36	24	46
Port Vale	25	12	7	6	42	26	43
Hull	28	12	7	9	42	39	43
York	28	11	7	10	38	28	40
Bradford	27	11	7	9	36	34	40
Leyton	28	10	8	10	36	40	38
Cambridge	28	10	7	11	40	42	37
Bourne	25	9	8	8	30	30	35
Blackpool	28	10	4	14	43	52	34
Hudders	26	8	8	10	28	33	32
Wrexham	25	8	7	10	40	42	31
Swansea	25	7	8	10	8	35	29
Cardiff	24	6	10	8	36	40	28
Rotherham	25	7	7	11	34	41	28
Brighton	27	6	10	11	29	43	28
Fulham	27	7	5	15	28	39	26
Exeter	24	6	7	11	32	46	25
Hartlepool	28	5	6	17	22	42	21
Barnet	26	2	6	18	24	53	12

ENGLISH DIVISION THREE

Crewe	25	15	6	4	51	33	51
Wycombe	26	13	8	5	45	35	47
Shrewsbury	24	13	6	5	40	28	45
Preston	24	12	7	5	54	38	43
Walsall	26	12	7	7	33	28	43
Chester	24	12	5	7	39	26	41
Torquay	26	9	11	6	40	38	38
Bury	26	11	5	10	39	35	38
Rochdale	24	10	7	7	41	24	37
Scunthorpe	25	9	9	7	37	23	36
Chesterfield	25	10	5	10	34	39	35
Carlisle	26	8	9	9	33	28	33
Colchester	25	9	5	11	41	49	32
Scarborough	26	9	5	12	31	37	32
Gillingham	25	8	8	9	30	32	32
Doncaster	27	9	5	13	28	40	32
Mansfield	27	8	7	12	30	41	31
Lincoln	23	8	5	10	33	39	29
Darlington	27	6	9	12	31	42	27
Wigan	25	6	7	12	34	47	25
Hereford	25	5	5	15	33	50	20
Northam	25	2	7	16	23	48	13

SCOTTISH SECOND DIVISION

Stranraer	23	15	4	4	40	21	34
Alloa	23	10	8	5	27	21	28
Meadowb	24	9	9	6	39	33	27
East Fife	24	10	6	8	41	34	26
QSouth	23	11	3	9	47	31	25
Stenho	22	10	5	7	34	28	25
Berwick	23	8	8	7	39	30	24
Forfar	23	9	6	8	33	29	24
Arbroath	23	9	4	10	32	44	22
East Stirling	23	7	6	10	32	39	20
Queen's P	24	7	6	11	30	49	20
Montrose	23	8	3	12	36	45	19
Cowdenb	22	5	5	12	27	38	15
Albion	24	4	7	13	25	40	15

NORTHERN IRISH LEAGUE RESULTS

Ballyclare.....2 Glentoran 1
Carrick .....1 Cliftonville 0
Crusaders .....2 Distillery 2
Glenavon .....3 Ballymena.....2
Larne .....1 Bangor.....1
Newry.....0 Coleraine 0
Omagh.....1 Linfield 3
Portadown .....1 Ards.....0

TABLE

Portadown	20	15	4	1	53	12	49
Linfield	19	15	2	2	46	15	47
Glenavon	19	15	1	3	48	21	46
Crusaders	20	13	3	4	42	21	42
Coleraine	20	8	6	6	29	29	30
Cliftonville	19	8	5	6	30	20	29
Distillery	19	8	5	6	32	27	29
Bangor	19	9	2	8	32	34	29
Glentoran	19	6	4	9	28	27	22
Carrick	20	5	5	10	32	50	20
Ballyclare	20	5	4	11	23	43	19
Omagh	20	5	3	12	25	44	18
Ards	19	5	2	12	37	44	17
Ballymena	20	4	4	12	26	48	16
Larne	19	3	5	11	23	40	14
Newry	18	1	5	12	9	40	8

IRELAND PREMIER LEAUGE RESULTS

Group A

Galway.....0 Cork City 1
Shamrock R.....1 Bohemians 2

Group B

Cobh Ramblers 1 Limerick.....0
Monaghan UTD1 Dundalk.....1

TABLE

Group A

Cork City	3	2	1	0	6	3	5
Galway	3	2	0	1	8	4	4
Bohemians	3	2	0	1	5	4	4
Derry City	3	1	1	1	4	5	3
Shelbourne	3	0	2	1	2	4	2
Shamrock Rs	3	0	0	3	3	8.0	

Group B

Dundalk	3	1	2	0	3	1	4
Cobh Ram	3	1	2	0	2	1	4
Monaghan	3	0	3	0	2	2	3
St Patrick's	3	1	1	1	1	2	3
Drogheda U	3	1	0	2	2	3	2
Limerick	3	1	0	2	1	2	2

LUXEMBOURG RESULTS

Avenir Beggen .3 Fola Esch 1
Aris Bonnevoie 0 CS Greven 0
Red Boys Dir ...1 S Luxemburg ..3
Jeunesse Esch ..0 F91 Dudelange 0
CS Petange .....0 Union Lburg...3

TABLE

Avenir Be	16	11	3	2	42	16	25
CS Greven	16	10	3	3	31	14	23
Jeunesse Es	16	8	6	2	21	9	22
Union Lux	16	9	2	5	24	19	20
F91 Dude	16	7	5	4	33	23	19
Aris Bonne	16	3	7	6	17	24	13
CS Petange	16	3	6	7	28	32	12
Fola Esch	16	2	6	8	15	29	10
S Luxemburg	16	4	1	11	18	37	9
Red Boys Dif	16	2	3	11	19	45	7

LIONS WIN CUP

Cup holders BCC Lions 3 league champions Iwuanyanwu Nationale 2 (on penalties) to win the Nigerian Super Cup played in Enugu, eastern Nigeria.

SAO PAULO CHAMPIONSHIP
— January 24 —

Guarani.....1 America 2
Ituano.....0 Mogi Mirim....0
Novorizontino.1 Ferroviaria.....3
Portuguesa .....1 Corinthians....3
Santo Andre ....1 Sao Paulo 4
Uniao Sao Joao 1 Ponte Preta 0
Santos v Bragantino: Postponed - waterlogged pitch
Note: Rio de Janeiro championship starts January 30

MEXICAN ROUND-UP
— January 24 —

Atlante.....1 Veracruz 0
Cruz Azul .....1 America 0
Guadalajara .....0 Hidalgo.....0
Leon .....1 UAG.....1
Monterrey .....2 Atlas 2
Queretaro.....1 Necaxa 1
Santos.....3 Morelia 3
Toluca.....1 Tamaulipas.....0
UNAM .....1 Puebla.....1
Uni de Guad ....0 UNL.....2

Group One

Santos	26	10	9	7	38	39	29
Necaxa	26	9	10	7	37	34	28
Puebla	25	6	12	7	29	34	24
Universidad	25	8	8	9	29	34	24
UNL	26	5	14	7	25	33	24

Group Two

Atlante	25	11	3	11	45	40	25
UNAM	26	9	6	11	40	34	24
Morelia	26	8	7	11	39	45	23
Leon	25	7	8	10	27	34	22
Queretaro	26	4	10	12	24	43	18

Group Three

Toluca	26	12	8	6	34	22	32
Cruz Azul	26	11	8	7	36	23	30
America	26	13	4	9	45	34	30
Veracruz	26	6	9	11	34	48	21
Tamaulipas	26	4	11	11	26	34	19

Group Four

UAG	26	10	13	3	31	19	33
Guadalajara	26	12	7	7	35	24	31
Atlas	26	11	6	9	37	31	28
Hidalgo	26	9	8	9	30	35	26
Monterrey	26	8	9	9	37	40	25

Note: Top two teams in each group qualify for the quarter-finals. Teams play twice against all other teams regardless of group.

AFRICAN RESULT
— January 24 —

C.S. St Denis of La Reunion 1 Linare of Lesotho 0 in an Africa Cup first-round first-leg match. Scorer: Tsimba Razafintianolina (29th min)
Attendance: 3,000

WORLD RESULTS & TABLES

ITALIAN FIRST DIVISION

Atalanta	0	Milan	1
Genoa	0	Parma	4
Inter	3	Cagliari	3
Juventus	2	Foggia	0
Lecce	0	Sampdoria	3
Napoli	1	Roma	1
Piacenza	3	Reggiana	2
Udinese	1	Torino	1
Lazio	4	Cremonese	2

ITALIAN FIRST DIVISION RESULTS

AC Milan	21	12	8	1	23	8	32
Juventus	21	10	8	3	35	19	28
Sampdoria	21	12	4	5	38	26	28
Parma	21	11	5	5	32	15	27
Internazionale	21	9	7	5	32	21	25
Lazio	21	9	7	5	28	23	25
Napoli	21	8	7	6	32	24	23
Torino	21	8	7	6	27	21	23
Foggia	21	5	10	6	30	26	20
Roma	21	5	10	6	18	20	20
Cagliari	21	6	8	7	28	34	20
Piacenza	21	6	7	8	19	29	19
Cremonese	21	6	6	9	24	28	18
Udinese	21	4	9	8	15	24	17
Reggiana	21	5	6	10	16	26	16
Genoa	21	4	8	9	14	27	16
Atalanta	21	4	7	10	21	37	15
Lecce	21	1	5	16	15	39	6

SPANISH FIRST DIVISION RESULTS

Athletic Bilbao	4	Lerida	0
Racing Sant	0	Logrones	0
Real Oviedo	1	Celta	0
Real Valladolid	0	Real Madrid	0
Osasuna	0	Sevilla	0
Real Zaragoza	3	Real Sociedad	0
Barcelona	2	Albacete	1
Atletico Mad	2	Valencia	0
Tenerife	3	Rayo Valle	1
Dep Coruna	2	Sporting Gij	1

SPANISH FIRST DIVISION

Dep Coruna	21	13	6	2	29	7	32
Barcelona	21	12	4	5	41	21	28
Sporting Gijo	21	12	2	7	33	23	26
Real Madrid	21	10	5	6	29	24	25
Athletic Bilb	21	10	4	7	35	24	24
Real Zaragoza	21	9	4	8	34	27	22
Sevilla	21	7	8	6	26	19	22
Albacete	21	6	10	5	29	27	22
Racing Sant	21	8	6	7	20	18	22
Real Oviedo	21	7	8	6	24	26	22
Real Sociedad	21	8	6	7	26	29	22
Atletico Mad	21	6	8	7	31	26	20
Tenerife	21	8	4	9	27	33	20
Valencia	21	6	7	8	23	29	20
Logrones	21	5	8	8	26	31	18
Rayo Vallec	21	7	4	10	28	39	18
Celta	21	5	7	9	16	24	17
Real Vallad	21	4	7	10	14	28	15
Osasuna	21	4	5	12	16	34	13
Lerida	21	3	6	12	11	29	12

GREEK FIRST DIVISION

Panahaiki	2	Olympiakos	1
Aris	2	AEK	0
Athinaikos	1	Naoussa	3
Kalamaria	1	Levadiakos	0
Edesaikos	1	Larissa	0
Panionios	2	Panathinaikos	4
PAOK	2	Iraklis	0
Xanthi	4	Apollon	1
OFI	p	Doxa	p

GREEK FIRST DIVISION

AEK	22	16	3	3	45	17	51
Panathinaikos	22	14	3	5	51	26	45
Aris	22	12	6	4	37	21	42
Olympiakos	22	10	10	2	34	17	40
PAOK	22	10	8	4	32	19	38
OFI	21	9	5	6	39	24	32
Iraklis	22	8	7	7	38	30	31
Levadiakos	22	9	6	8	28	30	30
Doxa	21	8	5	8	25	35	29
Xanthi	22	7	7	8	32	35	27
Panionios	22	7	5	10	34	40	26
Edesaikos	22	7	4	11	30	40	25
Larissa	22	6	6	10	28	35	24
Kalamaria	22	6	6	10	24	33	24
Apollon	22	5	8	9	18	29	23
Athinaikos	22	5	6	11	19	34	21
Panahaiki	22	4	6	12	23	43	18
Naoussa	22	4	1	17	24	52	13

FRENCH FIRST DIVISION RESULTS

Caen 0 Paris Saint-Germain 2 (Ginola 13rd, Le Guen 84th). Attendance: 20,000

Bordeaux 1 (Vercruysse 35th) Saint-Etienne 2 (Despeyroux 16th, Wohlfarth 36th). 15,000

Lyon 1 (Roy 55th) Auxerre 0. 10,000

Montpellier 1 (Lefevre 78th) Nantes 0. 2,000

Strasbourg 0 Le Havre 3 (Tiehi 61st, Moreau 64th, Guruli 80th). 8,000

Sochaux 1 (Caveglia 78th) Cannes 1 (Ayache 17th). 4,000

Angers 1 (Lagrange 82nd pen) Lens 2 (Boli 14th, Laigle 77th) 5,000

Metz 0 Martigues 0. 5,000

Lille 3 (Etame 46th, 78th, Hansen 67th) Toulouse 0. 8,000

FRANCE

Paris St Ger	24	16	6	2	34	12	38
Marseille	24	14	6	4	35	20	34
Bordeaux	24	12	5	7	31	22	29
Montpellier	24	10	8	6	27	22	28
Auxerre	24	11	5	8	33	19	27
Nantes	24	8	10	6	26	18	26
Strasbourg	24	7	11	6	27	26	25
Cannes	24	8	9	7	27	29	25
Lyon	24	10	5	9	23	25	25
Monaco	24	8	8	8	35	27	24
St Etienne	24	7	10	7	23	20	24
Sochaux	24	6	11	7	24	24	23
Lens	24	6	11	7	21	21	23
Metz	24	6	9	9	20	23	21
Lille	24	5	10	9	24	31	20
Le Havre	24	4	12	8	18	25	20
Martigues	24	4	11	9	23	35	19
Caen	24	8	3	13	18	35	19
Angers	24	3	9	12	22	36	15
Toulouse	24	3	9	12	15	36	15

DUTCH FIRST DIVISION RESULTS

MVV Maast	0	Sparta R	0
Willem II Til	1	PSV Eind	1
FC Volendam	1	VVV Venlo	1
FC Groningen	2	C Leeuwarden	2
Ajax Amster	3	Vitesse Arn	1
F Rotterdam	1	RKC Waalwijk	1
NAC Breda	2	FC Twente E	1
GAE Deventer	3	Roda JC Ke	1
SC Heerenveen	1	FC Utrecht	0

DUTCH FIRST DIVISION

Ajax Amste	19	16	2	1	54	11	34
F Rotterdam	19	13	5	1	40	14	31
Vitesse Arn	20	13	2	5	46	18	28
PSV Eind	21	10	8	3	37	19	28
Roda JC Ke	18	10	3	5	29	20	23
NAC Breda	20	10	3	7	40	29	23
Willem II Til	20	9	4	7	34	23	22
FC Twente E	20	8	5	7	26	22	21
VVV Venlo	21	6	8	7	21	33	20
Sparta Rotter	20	6	7	7	29	30	19
GAE Deventer	20	8	3	9	30	33	19
MVV Maastr	20	6	6	8	27	36	18
SC Heerenveen	21	6	6	9	19	39	18
FC Utrecht	20	6	4	10	24	42	16
FC Groningen	20	4	4	12	23	47	12
FC Volendam	20	4	3	13	25	42	11
RKC Waalwijk	19	1	6	12	18	39	8
C Leeuwarden	20	1	5	14	14	39	7

BELGIAN FIRST DIVISION

FC Liege	2	Cercle Brugge	1
Beveren	0	Standard Liege	2
Mechelen	0	Lierse	0
Molenbeek	0	Lommel	0
Genk	0	Anderlecht	2
Seraing	3	Ghent	0
Waregem	1	Antwerp	2
Club Brugge	2	Charleroi	0
Ekeren	1	Ostend	2

BELGIAN FIRST DIVISION

Anderlecht	22	16	4	2	55	23	36
Club Brugge	22	13	8	1	34	15	34
Seraing	22	11	8	3	36	17	30
Charleroi	22	13	3	6	45	30	29
Antwerp	22	10	8	4	32	24	28
Standard Liege	22	9	6	7	27	16	24
Mechelen	22	6	12	4	27	21	24
Ostend	22	6	11	5	31	30	23
Lommel	22	7	8	7	28	28	22
Ekeren	22	7	6	9	29	31	20
Ghent	22	5	10	7	31	35	20
Beveren	22	5	9	8	25	28	19
FC Liege	22	5	8	9	25	39	18
Cercle Brugge	22	5	7	10	33	46	17
Lierse	22	3	11	8	20	29	17
Molenbeek	22	5	6	11	22	33	16
Waregem	22	3	5	14	20	44	11
Genk	22	1	6	15	23	54	8

PORTUGUESE CUP SIXTH ROUND

Famalicao	1	Estrela Am	3
Rio Ave	2	Espinho	1
Salgueiros	0	Porto	2
Tirsense	0	Trofense	2
Belenenses	2	Benfica	1
Chaves	0	Lourosa	1

(after extra time)

PORTUGAL FIRST DIVISION

Benfica	17	12	4	1	39	17	28
Sporting	17	11	3	3	28	12	25
Porto	17	9	6	2	27	10	24
Boavista	17	9	2	6	27	18	20
Maritimo	17	7	5	5	24	21	19
Estrela Ama	17	6	6	5	19	15	18
Guimaraes	17	7	4	6	14	12	18
Salgueiros	17	8	2	7	26	26	18
Gil Vicente	17	6	6	5	18	23	18
Farense	17	8	0	9	21	28	16
Pacos Ferreira	17	5	5	7	15	20	15
Belenenses	17	6	3	8	18	25	15
Setubal	17	6	2	9	28	24	14
Braga	17	4	5	8	14	18	13
Beira Mar	17	5	3	9	12	17	13
Famalicao	17	5	3	9	15	30	13
Uniao Madeira	17	4	3	10	17	28	11
Estoril	17	2	4	11	8	28	8

FA CUP FIFTH ROUND

Cardiff v Newcastle or Luton
Oldham or Stoke v Plymouth or Barnsley
Kidderminster v Notts County or West Ham
Wolverhampton v Ipswich
Bolton or Arsenal v Aston Villa
Oxford or Leeds v Chelsea or Sheffield Wednesday
Wimbledon v Manchester United
Stockport or Bristol City v Charlton or Blackburn

Matches to be played on February 19, 20 and 21.

SCOTLAND

The Scottish Football Association is to investigate two ugly incidents which disrupted the third round of the Scottish Cup.

Clydebank goalkeeper Alan Monaghan was attacked by Dundee fans during the 1-1 tie at Kilbowie Stadium while off-field staff were involved in a half-time fracas between Partick and Hearts, won 1-0 by Hearts.

Nearly 100 visiting Dundee fans invaded the pitch after Dundee's Paul Tosh scored an 83rd minute equaliser.

Monaghan was attacked in his goalmouth before being rescued by his teammates. Referee Alistair Huett held up the game for five minutes as the goalkeeper was taken to the dressing room for treatment.

At Firhill, where Mo Johnston's goal sent Hearts into the fourth round, tempers flared shortly before half-time when Chic Charnley of Partick tried to elbow John Colquhoun, who threw a punch in retaliation.

Colquhoun was sent off but Charnley was only booked and the tension spilled over at the interval with police and stewards escorting players and officials to the dressing rooms.

Scottish FA chief executive Jim Farry said reports from both matches were "very disturbing".

"The association has spoken out long and often about the pitch being for players only. We will start to put the whole thing through the normal procedure tomorrow," Farry said.

ITALY

AC Milan maintained its grip on the Italian league crown with a 1-0 victory at lowly Atalanta protecting a four-point lead as closest challengers Juventus and Sampdoria both had comfortable wins.

Daniele Massaro's second goal in successive matches proved sufficient for the champions, bidding for its third straight league title, to overcome stubborn resistance from Atalanta.

Juventus kept up their challenge with a 2-0 win over Foggia in Turin.

Forward Fabrizio Ravanelli linked with Roberto Baggio to give his side the lead in the 69th minute while Baggio, presented with the European Footballer of the Year award before the game, struck in the 77th minute for his 12th goal of the season.

Sampdoria missed two penalties against relegation-doomed Lecce, but still finished 3-0 winners as veteran defender Pietro Vierchowod and striker Roberto Mancini both found the net and Lecce captain Giampaolo Ceramicola scored an own-goal.

Milan tops the table with 32 points from 21 games, while Juventus and Sampdoria share second-place on 28 points.

Midfielder Gianfranco Zola netted twice to spearhead fourth placed Parma's impressive four-goal win at strugglers Genoa. Swede Tomas Brolin and Colombia's Faustino Asprilla scored the other goals from the penalty spot.

Davide Fontolan headed a last minute equaliser for fifth-placed Internazionale in a dramatic 3-3 draw at home to Cagliari.

Milan, beaten only once this season, began its match against Atalanta keen to celebrate club president Silvio Berlusconi's recent entry into politics.

The ill-tempered match in which five players were booked yielded few scoring chances as Milan's defence, now beaten only eight times in 21 matches, restricted Atalanta to a few long-range efforts.

Massaro settled the contest in the 55th minute, combining neatly with Dane Brian Laudrup in the Atalanta penalty area before firing a low, diagonal shot beyond goalkeeper Davide Pinato.

Juventus gave former star Roberto Bettega the perfect start in his new job as the club's deputy general manager. The UEFA Cup holders dominated the first half as the gifted Baggio and midfielder Antonio Conte narrowly failed to score.

In the second half Baggio drew the Foggia defence with a fine run before putting over a perfect cross for Ravanelli to open the scoring.

Goal-scorer turned goal-provider eight minutes later, as Ravanelli's lob beat goalkeeper Francesco Mancini and rebounded off the crossbar into the path of Baggio, who sealed victory with a simple tap-in.

If Sampdoria fails to catch Milan in the championship race, it may rue a series of costly penalty misses.

Against Lecce, both Mancini and Attilio Lombardo missed the target with their spotkicks to take the number of penalties squandered by Sampdoria this season to five out of 10.

Luckily for La Samp, the mistakes made little difference to the final result.

Vierchowod put his side in the lead in the 53rd minute, penalising the Lecce defence for failing to clear a corner with a fierce shot into the roof of the net.

In the 85th minute Ceramicola deflected a cross from Mancini into his own net and five minutes later, Mancini's seventh goal of the season made amends for his earlier penalty miss.

Inter looked to be heading for its seventh defeat of the season when Luis Oliveira and Vittorio Pusceddu gave Cagliari a shock 2-0 lead at the San Siro stadium.

But Uruguay's Ruben Sosa inspired his side to a fine comeback with two well-taken goals either side of half-time.

Inter surged forward in search of an unlikely win and only fine saves from Valerio Fiori denied Dennis Bergkamp and Sosa.

With five minutes remaining, Panamanian Julio Dely Valdez claimed his 10th goal of the season to give Cagliari the advantage again, before Fontolan's late goal spared his side from an embarrassing home defeat.

ITALY'S GOALSCORERS

13 - Andrea Silenzi (Torino), Daniel Fonseca (Napoli)

12 - Roberto Baggio (Juventus), Ruben Sosa (Inter)

11 - Ruud Gullit (Sampdoria), Marco Branca (Udinese)

10 - Julio Dely Valdez (Cagliari), Gianfranco Zola (Parma)

9 - Bryan Roy (Foggia)

8 - Maurizio Ganz (Atalanta), Andreas Moeller (Juventus), Andrea Tentoni (Cremonese)

FRANCE

Brazilian striker Anderson kept nervous Marseille in the race for the French league First Division title by scoring both goals in a tight 2-1 victory over dangerous Monaco in the Stade Velodrome.

The win gave Marseille two badly needed points and kept it close to Paris St Germain.

Marseille started slowly and Monaco striker Youri Djorkaeff created a sensation with a goal on 25 minutes, after teammate Juergen Klinsmann found open space in Marseille territory.

The team from the principality had little time to enjoy its lead. Goalkeeper Jean-Luc Ettori blundered in front of his line to give Marseille a 26th minute penalty, which was converted by Anderson in the 26th minute.

In the second half Marseille started pushing and Anderson made it 2-1 in the 53th minute with a strike from 25 metres that Ettori could not touch.

Monaco's defence could hardly contain Marseille's strikers and Dutuel almost made it 3-1 with a shot inside the left post in the 62nd minute.

Monaco reacted aggressively and veteran German striker Klinsmann almost scored from close range with five minutes left.

The match ended in tension when Marseille defender Jocelyn Angolama was sent off for a foul on striker Ikpeba.

HOLLAND

Finnish striker Jari Litmanen struck twice to help Ajax Amsterdam extend its Dutch League lead with a 3-1 home win over Vitesse Arnhem.

The double from the league's top marksman enabled Ajax to move three points clear of Feyenoord Rotterdam, which dropped a point in a 1-1 draw at home to RKC Waalwijk.

Ajax found itself a goal down in the seventh minute when Huub Loeffen unleashed a powerful shot to put Vitesse in front.

Litmanen equalised 12 minutes later when he curved the ball past Vitesse goalkeeper Raymond van der Gouw from about 15 metres.

Swedish international Stefan Pettersson made it 2-1 for Ajax in the 66th minute, and Litmanen added his second a minute from the end with a superb shot from the deep.

Litmanen leads the Dutch scorers' list with 21 goals, followed by Vitesse's Hans Gilhaus on 16.

Defending champions Feyenoord narrowly escaped a humiliating defeat against relegation-threatened RKC Waalwijk.

RKC was the stronger side for most of the match and went ahead seven minutes after the interval through striker Marcel Brands.

But Feyenoord midfielder Arnold Scholten equalised in the 66th minute, frustrating RKC's hopes of its second win of the season.

'6 FROM 38 POOLS'

THE POOLS

THIS WEEK'S MATCH LIST

WEEK 445
SAT. 5TH FEBRUARY, 1994

ENGLISH DIVISION 1	BIRMINGHAM	PETERBORO	1	
	BOLTON	WATFORD	2	
	BRISTOL C.	TRANMERE	3	
	CHARLTON	GRIMSBY	4	
	LUTON	OXFORD UTD.	5	
	PORTSMOUTH	NOTTS C.	6	
	SOUTHEND	BARNSLEY	7	
	WEST BROM.	SUNDERLAND	8	
ENGLISH DIVISION 2	BLACKPOOL	EXETER	9	
	BOURNEMOUTH	LEYTON O.	10	
	BRADFORD C.	HARTLEPOOL	11	
	BRENTFORD	YORK	12	
	CAMBRIDGE U.	BARNET	13	
	CARDIFF	WREXHAM	14	
	HUDDERSFIELD	BURNLEY	15	
	HULL	SWANSEA	16	
	PLYMOUTH	BRISTOL R.	17	
	READING	PORT VALE	18	
	ROTHERHAM	BRIGHTON	19	
	STOCKPORT	FULHAM	20	
ENGLISH DIVISION 3	CARLISLE	NORTHAMPTON	21	
	CHESTER	MANSFIELD	22	
	CHESTERFIELD	LINCOLN	23	
	DONCASTER	SHREWSBURY	24	
	GILLINGHAM	CREWE	25	
	HEREFORD	BURY	26	
	ROCHDALE	PRESTON	27	
	SCARBORO	WALSALL	28	
	SCUNTHORPE	TORQUAY	29	
	WIGAN A.	COLCHESTER	30	
	WYCOMBE	DARLINGTON	31	
BEAZER HOMES LGE. PREMIER DIVISION	ATHERSTONE	HASTINGS T.	32	
	CHELMSFORD	SOLIHULL	33	
	CORBY	BURTON A.	34	
	DORCHESTER	SITTINGBOURNE	35	
	GLOUCESTER	HEDNESFORD	36	
	GRESLEY	CHELTENHAM	37	
	HALESOWEN	CAMBRIDGE C.	38	
RESERVE MATCHES				
	NUNEATON	WORCESTER	39	
SCOTTISH PREMIER	DUNDEE U.	DUNDEE	40	
	HIBERNIAN	ABERDEEN	41	
	KILMARNOCK	ST JOHNSTONE	42	
	MOTHERWELL	HEARTS	43	
	RAITH	CELTIC	44	
	RANGERS	PARTICK	45	
SCOTTISH DIVISION 1	BRECHIN	AYR	46	
	CLYDE	HAMILTON	47	
	CLYDEBANK	MORTON	48	
	FALKIRK	AIRDRIE	49	
	ST MIRREN	DUMBARTON	50	
	STIRLING A.	DUNFERMLINE	51	
SCOTTISH DIV. 2	BERWICK	COWDENBEATH	52	
	EAST FIFE	MEADOWBANK	53	
	E. STIRLING	Q. OF SOUTH	54	
	MONTROSE	FORFAR	55	

* BEAZER HOMES LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION

RESULTS AND DIVIDEND HOTLINES

Phone: 0055 33111 Australia, Wide. Or, Sydney (02) 11520; Melbourne (03) 11521; Brisbane (07) 11699; Adelaide (08) 11521; Perth (09) 11520.
Results are available from 8pm. Sundays, dividends after 5pm Mondays.

GET YOUR POOLS IN

Don't forget Pools Quick Pick

MATCH RESULTS

WEEK 444
SAT. 29TH JANUARY, 1994

F.A. CUP 4TH ROUND	GRIMSBY	ASTON VILLA	1	1-2
	KIDDERMINSTER	PRESTON	2	1-0
	NOTTS. C.	WEST HAM	3	1-1
	PLYMOUTH	BARNSLEY	4	2-2
ENGLISH DIVISION 2	BRIGHTON	BLACKPOOL	5	3-2
	BRISTOL R.	HUDDERSFIELD	6	0-0
	BURNLEY	CAMBRIDGE U.	7	3-0
	EXETER	BOURNEMOUTH	8	0-2
	FULHAM	READING	9	1-0
	LEYTON O.	HULL	10	3-1
	YORK	BRADFORD C.	11	1-1
ENGLISH DIVISION 3	BURY	SCARBORO	12	0-2
	COLCHESTER	GILLINGHAM	13	1-2
	CREWE	CHESTERFIELD	14	0-1
	DARLINGTON	SCUNTHORPE	15	2-1
	LINCOLN	ROCHDALE	16	1-1
	MANSFIELD	WIGAN A.	17	2-3
	NORTHAMPTON	DONCASTER	18	0-0
	SHREWSBURY	WYCOMBE	19	1-0
	TORQUAY	CHESTER	20	1-3
G.M. VAUXHALL CONF. LGE.	BROMSGROVE	MACCLESFIELD	21	3-0
	DAGENHAM & R.	ALTRINCHAM	22	3-0
	DOVER	STAFFORD	23	2-0
	MERTHYR T.	GATESHEAD	24	3-0
	RUNCORN	WITTON A.	25	1-0
	TELFORD	SLOUGH	26	4-1
	WELLING UTD.	HALIFAX	27	0-2
	WOKING	SOUTHPORT	28	1-0
	YEOVIL	KETTERING	29	1-0
N.P.L. PREMIER DIVISION	ACCRINGTON	KNOWSLEY UTD.	30	2-1
	BARROW	FRICKLEY A.	31	1-3
	BOSTON	COLWYN BAY	32	6-1
	CHORLEY	MATLOCK	33	1-2
	EMLEY	BISHOP AUCK	34	2-2
	HYDE	HORWICH	35	1-1
	LEEK	MORECAMBE	36	2-0
	WHITLEY BAY	DROYLSDEN	37	1-1
	WINSFORD	BUXTON	38	pp

THE POOLS RESULTS HISTORY AT WEEK 29/1/94 WEEK 444

NO. OF TIMES EACH NUMBER OCCURED												NO. OF WEEKS NUMBER OCCURED									
1 50	2 51	3 70	4 42	5 50	6 84	7 64	8 83	9 66	10 84			1 3	2 6	3 0	4 0	5 7	6 7	7 5	8 6	9 2	10 2
11 83	12 96	13 81	14 80	15 86	16 78	17 87	18 77	19 72	20 95			11 0	12 14	13 7	14 14	15 3	16 0	17 3	18 2	19 9	20 5
21 86	22 93	23 89	24 79	25 77	26 91	27 83	28 108	29 94	30 115			21 7	22 7	23 4	24 2	25 10	26 8	27 2	28 1	29 3	30 1
31 97	32 85	33 89	34 106	35 105	36 108	37 92	38 87					31 4	32 1	33 7	34 0	35 0	36 1	37 0	38 7		

Results History is from Week 38, the start of six from 38 Pools

RESULTS OF WEEK 444 SAT. JANUARY 29, 1994

Winning Match Numbers (in numerical order):

4, 11, 16, 34, 35, 37.

Supplementary Number 3.

UK SOCCER RESULTS AND TABLES

FA CUP FOURTH ROUND

Cardiff	1	Manchester City	0
Charlton	0	Blackburn	0
(replay February 8)			
Chelsea	1	Sheffield Wed.	1
(replay February 9)			
Grimsby	1	Aston Villa	2
Ipswich	3	Tottenham	0
Kidderminster	1	Preston	0
Newcastle	1	Luton	1
(replay February 8)			
Notts County	1	West Ham	1
(replay February 9)			
Oldham	0	Stoke	0
(replay February 9)			
Oxford	2	Leeds	2
(replay February 9)			
Plymouth	2	Barnsley	2
(replay February 9)			
Port Vale	0	Wolves	2
Stockport	p	Bristol City	p
(New date: Wednesday, February 9)			
Wimbledon	2	Sunderland	1
Norwich v Manchester United			
Bolton v Arsenal (played last night)			

LEAGUE CUP QUARTER-FINAL ROUND REPLAY

Tranmere	2	Nottingham Forest	0

(Tranmere meet Aston Villa in the semis final. First leg February 16 second leg February 22)

ENGLISH DIVISION ONE

Derby	1	Watford	2

ENGLISH DIVISION TWO

Barnet	0	Brentford	0
Brighton	3	Blackpool	2
Bristol Rovers	0	Huddersfield	0
Burnley	3	Cambridge	0
Exeter	0	Bournemouth	2
Leyton Orient	3	Hull	1
York	1	Bradford	1
Swansea	1	Hartlepool	1

ENGLISH DIVISION THREE

Bury	0	Scarborough	2
Colchester	1	Gillingham	2
Crewe	0	Chesterfield	1
Darlington	2	Scunthorpe	1
Lincoln	1	Rochdale	1
Mansfield	2	Wigan	3
Northampton	0	Doncaster	0
Shrewsbury	1	Wycombe	0
Torquay	1	Chester	3
Walsall	0	Carlisle	1

GM VAUXHALL CONFERENCE LEAGUE

Bromsgrove	3	Macclesfield	0
Dagenham/Red	3	Altrincham	0
Dover	2	Stafford	0
Merthyr Tydfil	3	Gateshead	0
Runcorn	1	Witton	0
Telford	4	Slough	1
Welling	0	Halifax	2
Woking	1	Southport	0
Yeovil	1	Kettering	0

NORTHERN PREMIER LEAGUE

Accring Stanley	2	Knowsley	1
Barrow	1	Frickley	3
Boston	6	Colwyn Bay	1
Chorley	1	Matlock	2
Emley	2	Bishop Auckland	2
Hyde	1	Horwich	1
Leek	2	Morecambe	0
Whitley Bay	1	Droylsden	1
Winsford	p	Buxton	p

DIADORA LEAGUE

Aylesbury	3	Wokingham	0
Basingstoke	1	Marlow	3
Carshalton	4	Waverhoe	3
Dorking	0	Bromley	3
Dulwich	0	Hendon	1
Grays	0	Chesham	2

Pools panel assessed result
Fulham v Reading -- away win
Winsford v Boston -- home win
East Stirling v Aberdeen -- away win
Stranraer v Forfar -- home win

SCOTTISH FA CUP THIRD ROUND

Airdrieonians	1	Dunfermline	1
Alloa	p	Ross County	p
Albroath	2	Dundee United	3
Clydebank	1	Dundee	1
East Stirling	p	Aberdeen	p
Hibernian	2	Clyde	1
Kilmarnock	2	Ayr	1
Morton	2	Cowdenbeath	2
Motherwell	1	Celtic	0
Partick	0	Hearts	1
Raith	2	Brechin	0
Rangers	4	Dumbarton	1
St Johnstone	2	Hamilton	0
St Mirren	2	Montrose	0
Stirling	1	Berwick	0
Stranraer	2	Falkirk	1

SCOTTISH DIVISION TWO

Albion	1	East Fife	1
Queen's Park	3	Meadowbank	2
Stenhousemuir	p	Queen of the South	p

ENGLISH DIVISION ONE

Crystal Palace	26	15	4	7	45	30	49
Charlton	27	14	6	7	35	25	48
Millwall	27	13	8	6	37	26	47
Leicester	27	13	7	7	47	32	46
Tranmere	27	13	6	8	39	33	45
Nottingham Forest	26	12	8	6	41	30	44
Derby	27	13	3	11	43	41	42
Wolverhampton	27	10	12	5	41	27	42
Stoke	27	12	6	9	37	39	42
Southend	28	12	4	12	44	39	40
Bolton	28	10	9	9	36	32	39
Bristol City	28	10	8	10	30	33	38
Portsmouth	27	9	10	8	31	34	37
Sunderland	27	11	4	12	29	34	37
Notts County	27	11	3	13	38	47	36
Middlesbrough	26	8	10	8	34	28	34
Luton	26	9	5	12	32	34	32
Watford	28	8	7	13	42	54	31
Grimsby	26	6	12	8	31	30	30
Birmingham	28	7	7	14	29	43	28
West Bromwich	27	6	8	13	37	44	26
Oxford	28	6	8	14	32	50	26
Barnsley	27	6	7	14	31	45	25
Peterborough	25	5	8	12	22	31	23

ENGLISH DIVISION TWO

Reading	27	17	7	3	55	27	58
Bristol Rovers	27	14	7	6	36	28	49
Plymouth	25	14	6	5	48	32	48
Stockport	24	14	5	5	42	22	47
Burnley	27	14	4	9	46	33	46
Brentford	28	12	10	6	38	24	46
Port Vale	26	12	7	6	42	26	43
Hull	28	12	7	9	42	39	43
York	28	11	7	10	38	28	40
Bradford	27	11	7	9	36	34	40
Leyton Orient	28	10	8	10	36	40	38
Cambridge	28	10	7	11	40	42	37
Bournemouth	25	9	8	8	30	30	35
Blackpool	28	10	4	14	43	52	34
Huddersfield	26	8	8	10	28	33	32
Wrexham	25	8	7	10	40	42	31
Swansea	25	7	8	10	28	35	29
Cardiff	24	6	10	8	38	40	28
Rotherham	25	7	7	11	34	41	28
Brighton	27	6	10	11	29	43	28
Fulham	27	7	5	15	28	39	26
Exeter	24	6	7	11	32	46	25
Hartlepool	28	5	6	17	22	42	21
Barnet	26	2	6	18	24	53	12

ENGLISH DIVISION THREE

Crewe	25	15	6	4	51	33	51
Wycombe	26	13	8	5	45	35	47
Shrewsbury	24	13	6	5	40	28	45
Preston	24	12	7	5	54	38	43
Walsall	26	12	7	7	33	28	43
Chester	24	12	5	7	39	26	41
Torquay	26	9	11	6	40	38	38
Bury	26	11	5	10	39	35	38
Rochdale	24	10	7	7	4	24	37
Scunthorpe	25	9	9	7	37	23	36
Chesterfield	25	10	5	10	34	39	35
Carlisle	26	8	9	9	33	28	33
Colchester	25	9	5	11	41	49	32
Scarborough	26	9	5	12	31	37	32
Gillingham	25	8	8	9	30	32	32
Doncaster	27	9	5	13	28	40	32
Mansfield	27	8	7	12	30	41	31
Lincoln	23	8	5	10	33	39	29
Darlington	27	6	9	12	31	42	27
Wigan	25	6	7	12	34	47	25
Hereford	25	5	5	15	31	50	20
Northampton	25	2	7	16	23	48	13

SCOTLAND DIVISION TWO

Stranraer	23	15	4	4	40	21	34
Alloa	23	10	8	5	27	21	28
Meadowbank	24	9	9	6	39	33	27
East Fife	24	10	6	8	41	34	26
Queen of the South	23	11	3	9	47	31	25
Stenhousemuir	22	10	5	7	34	28	25
Berwick	23	8	8	7	39	30	24
Forfar	23	9	6	8	33	29	24
Arbroath	23	9	4	10	32	44	22
East Stirling	23	7	6	10	32	39	20
Queen's Park	24	7	6	11	30	49	20
Montrose	23	8	3	12	38	45	19
Cowdenbeath	22	5	5	12	27	38	15
Albion	24	4	7	13	25	40	15

ENGLISH FA CUP FOURTH ROUND

ROUND-UP

CARDIFF 1
MAN. CITY 0

Cardiff striker Nathan Blake blasted Manchester City out of the FA Cup and then demanded another big name for the chopping block in the fifth round.

"We don't mind who we get," said the Welsh Under 21 international after his superb 63rd minute winner for the English Second Division side.

"We feel we can beat anybody on our own patch.

"It was a great result for us. I've scored some good goals this season, but in terms of the money the club could earn this is the most important and it's a bit special because Tony Coton is a good 'keeper."

It was a disastrous day for City, who saw Coton carried off injured and missed a late penalty.

New chairman Francis Lee, whose consortium bought City for $7 million, missed the tie because he was on holiday in Barbados. The former England striker will be glad he was absent.

City boss Brian Horton moaned: "That result typifies what's been happening here. You can't take anything away from Cardiff, but I don't think much more can go wrong for us.

"It showed that we desperately need new players. Our defence did well, but the rest just didn't do enough. Cardiff fought harder, which is difficult for me to take. You can't do anything without fighting."

GRIMSBY 1
A. VILLA 2

Aston Villa manager Ron Atkinson and Grimsby boss Alan Buckley could not make that complaint after Villa defender Shaun Teale and home striker Steve Livingstone were sent off for brawling in Villa's 2-1 victory.

"I'll have to discipline Teale for that because you can't react to things like that as a professional," Atkinson said.

"Grimsby gave us a hard time, but you always expect a tough battle in these situations and I thought we plugged away well and adapted ourselves after the sendings-off. In my view we had the better chances."

Teale will now miss the first leg of Villa's League Cup semi-final at Tranmere after becoming only the second Villa man to be shown the red card during Atkinson's three seasons at the club.

KIDDERMINSTER 1
PRESTON 0

Non-League Kidderminster Harriers are now hoping they are paired with Villa or First Division Wolverhampton in Sunday's fifth round draw after their 1-0 home win over Third Division Preston.

CHARLTON 0
BLACKBURN 0

Charlton joint manager Steve Gritt felt his First Division title-chasers were worth more than a goalless draw against Premiership giants Blackburn.

"I thought we were the better team throughout and it must have been a long time since Alan Shearer could not get a single shot on target," Grit said.

Blackburn manager Kenny Dalglish admitted: "We've got to be happy with a replay. They were probably a bit better than us, but there wasn't much time for anybody on the ball and few good passes."

NEWCASTLE 1
LUTON 1

Luton manager David Pleat also had good reason to complain about the First Division side's 1-1 draw at Newcastle after an equalising penalty he described as "more than harsh".

"I'm disappointed in one way not to have won, but I shouldn't be because after their goal we had to come through 25 minutes of pressure and we came through strongly," said Pleat.

Newcastle boss Kevin Keegan admitted Luton fully deserved the draw. "Obviously we have to do it the hard way, but I've never known anyone win the Cup easily, so why should it happen to us?" he asked.

"The lads say it was a penalty, and we would have been hard done by had we lost. Luton rode their luck at times, but all in all it was a fair result."

WIMBLEDON 2
SUNDERLAND 1

In contrast, Sunderland boss Mick Buxton refused to blame the First Division side's 2-1 defeat at Wimbledon on referee Joe Worrall.

Sunderland and Grimsby were the only First Division sides not to clinch replays against Premiership opposition on Saturday.

OLDHAM 0
STOKE CITY 0

Indeed, Oldham boss Joe Royle was relieved to still be in the Cup after a goalless draw against Stoke at Boundary Park.

He said: "It was wasn't the most exciting cup tie, but at least we get another bite. We got hold of the game and put in plenty of pressure, but didn't threaten the goal enough."

LEEDS 2
OXFORD 2

Leeds manager Howard Wilkinson feared his side were sliding out of the Cup after falling 2-0 behind on Oxford's notoriously sloping ground.

"At 3.30 it was goodnight Vienna," he said after the Premiership side clawed back to force a replay. "When it's Cup football, on the slope, it's raining and they've got their tails up, you have problems.

"For the first 35 minutes they looked a very good team and we were on the ropes, but when we got the goal just before half-time, I felt we could turn it round."

Oxford manager Denis Smith said: "We went into this game as underdogs and we will go to Elland Road as underdogs, but Bolton won at Everton and Bristol City won at Anfield, so it's not beyond us."

FOURTH ROUND RESULTS

Chelsea 1 (Peacock 14th) Sheffield Wednesday 1 (Hyde 63rd). 26,094.

Grimsby 1 (Groves 58th) Aston Villa 2 (Houghton 13th, Yorke 78th). 15,771.

Ipswich 3 (Marshall 53rd, Johnson 64th, Thompson 85th) Tottenham 0. 22,539.

Kidderminster 1 (Humphreys 47th) Preston 0. 0-0. 7,000.

Newcastle 1 (Beardsley 65th, penalty) Luton 1 (Thorpe 35th). 32,216.

Notts County 1 (Lund 38th) West Ham 1 (Jones 41st). 1-1. 14,952.

Oldham 0 Stoke 0. 14,465.

Oxford 2 (Dyer 15th, Elliott 36th) Leeds 2 (Speed 43rd, Wetherall 64th). 11,029.

Plymouth 2 (Marshall 50th, Dalton 59th) Barnsley 2 (Payton 41st, Taggart 71st). 12,760.

Port Vale 0 Wolverhampton 2 (Blades 25th, Keen 89th). 21,999.

Sad finale . . . Liverpool manager Graeme Souness can't bear to look

SCOTTISH FA CUP

RANGERS 4
DUMBARTON 1

Scottish F.A. Cup holders Glasgow Rangers marched into the fourth round with a thumping 4-1 victory over First Division Dumbarton.

Gordon Durie put Rangers ahead after just three minutes and with two more from Englishmen Mark Hateley and Gary Stevens, the tie was effectively over by halftime.

Rangers's fourth goal came in the 67th minute when David Robertson sent a 25-yard free kick round a defensive wall and into the net, and Dumbarton notched a consolation through a Martin Mooney penalty.

Rangers will play the winners of the postponed tie between Alloa or non-league Ross County in the next round and Motherwell meets Dundee United, which won 3-2 at Arbroath.

Hearts meet Hibernian in an all-Edinburgh fifth round clash.

MOTHERWELL 1
CELTIC 0

Celtic's season was effectively ended when it was beaten 1-0 at Motherwell with a goal from its former striker Tommy Coyne eight minutes from time.

Celtic, which has not won since Christmas, was condemned to a fifth season without a trophy by Coyne's late header from a free-kick.

CLYDEBANK 1
DUNDEE 1

Clydebank's Cup tie against Dundee was halted by referee Alistair Huett after home goalkeeper Alan Monaghan was punched by fans who came on to the pitch after Dundee's Paul Tosh equalised in the 83rd minute.

Monaghan was treated in the dressing room. The tie finished 1-1. However, the Scottish Football Association is set to lead an inquiry into the attack.

HEARTS 1
PARTICK 0

Police broke up a fight between players and coaches of Partick Thistle and Hearts as they exchanged punches on the way to the dressing rooms at halftime.

Hearts, angered at having John Colqhoun sent off after he retaliated when apparently hit by Partick midfielder Chic Charnley's elbow, held on to win 1-0 through a Mo Johnston goal scored moments after the incident.

VENABLES IN, SOUNESS OUT, TOSHACK BACK

It was all-change in Britain as three long-running sagas affecting some of the biggest jobs in British soccer were all resolved on the same day.

Terry Venables was appointed England's new team coach, hours after John Toshack accepted a similar post with the Welsh FA.

And Graeme Souness resigned as Liverpool manager after almost three turbulent years trying to restore former glories at the Merseyside club.

Venables accepted his new post at a Wembley press conference — with a pledge to put the fun back into football.

The 51-year-old former Spurs and Barcelona manager said he was "delighted and honoured" to have been given the job of guiding the national team.

His 30-month, $643,000 contract runs until July 1996, covering the European Championship finals hosted by England.

"As a manager it's a terrific honour to be in charge of your country's football team," he said.

Terry Yorath: out of a job.

"It's a big task, about the biggest task I've faced. I'm looking forward to taking up the challenge immensely.

"Everyone's feeling very low in the game at the moment and I think it's about time we tried to put some fun back. "The only way we will enjoy it is if we win games and that's got to be my priority."

Forty-year-old Souness, announcing his decision to leave Anfield, admitted he had found the job harder than he had anticipated.

A series of transfer deals involving $64 million failed to pay dividends and Tuesday's 1-0 FA Cup defeat at home to Bristol City was probably the final straw for him.

"I took this job believing that I could return the club to its former glory but this proved to be more difficult than I anticipated," he said in a statement.

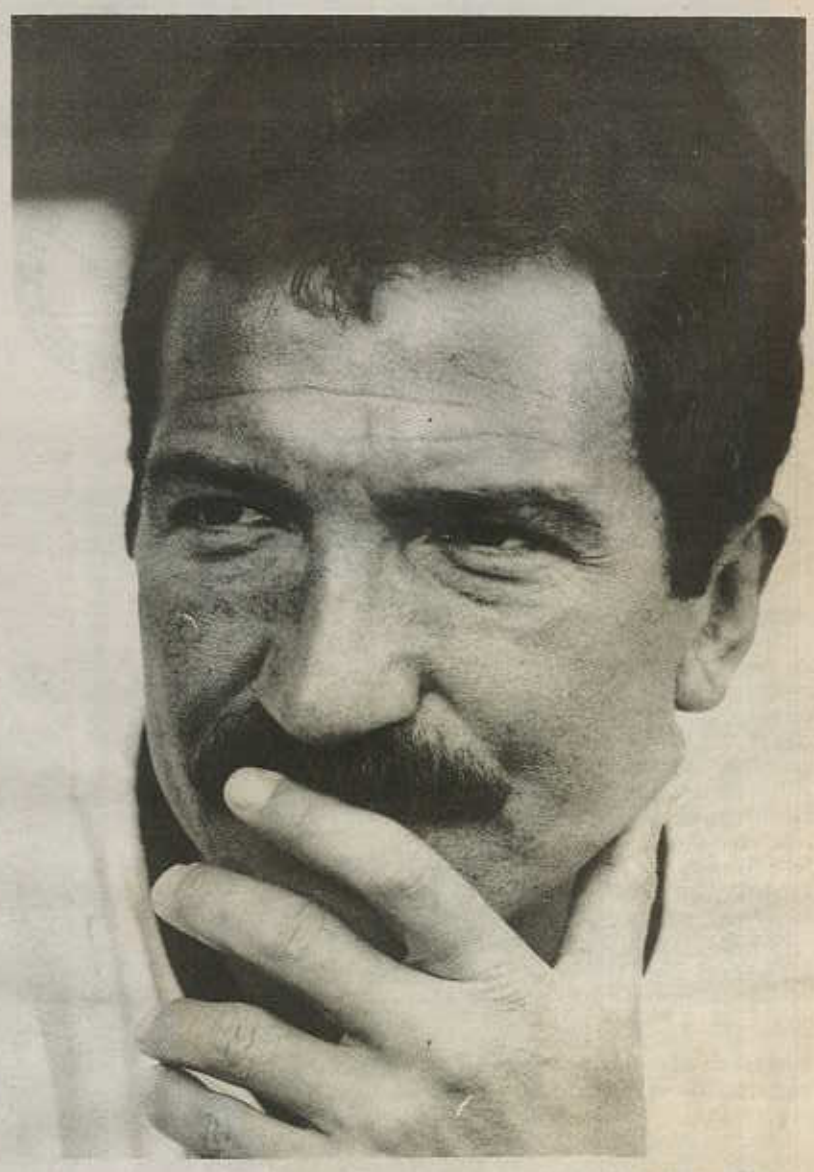
"The fans have been very patient but I feel that their patience is now running out. Liverpool Football Club has, and always will have, a very special place in my heart and I can only wish the club well and every success in the future."

Toshack, a former Liverpool player who won 40 caps for Wales between 1969 and 1980, said the challenge of managing the national side was one he could not resist.

He will continue to manage Spanish side Real Sociedad, and takes charge of the Welsh side on a part-time basis, with a contract worth $150,000 lasting until 1996.

His actual title will be technical director and he will have a full-time assistant, the former Wales boss Mike Smith, who was in charge between 1974 and 1979. Terry Yorath, the former Wales manager, failed to land a position with the national side and is now expected to return to club management.

UK'S coaching merry-go-round



Graham Souness: despite the millions he spent, his Anfield stint was a failure.

Taylor urges free role

Advice: Graham Taylor wants Venables to be given a greater chance of success.

BY IAN CHADBAND

ENGLAND

Former England manager Graham Taylor painted a miserable picture of the job for Terry Venables, the man who has succeeded him.

In his first major interview since resigning in the wake of England's World Cup failure two months ago, Taylor pleaded for his successor to be given a chance to do the job without having "one arm tied behind his back".

Taylor says he can see no reason "from a footballing point of view" why Venables should not land the post — and reckons the controversial candidate has already shown admirable keenness by not having already told the Football Association to "stuff your job".

But asked what he would tell Venables on what he should do once he'd got the job, Taylor could only joke: "Resign!".

In a more serious, but no more encouraging, vein he added: "I would turn round to him and say 'Just make sure you don't lose, pal'. It's as simple as that. You've got to win."

Speaking on BBC's Radio Five, Taylor insisted the main legacy he may have left Venables was to draw attention to the problems within the current England set-up.

"If I've stirred anything in the FA nest, privately, not publicly, it was to let them know that whether I stayed on or not as England manager, they must look at the whole structure to give the next manager more than an even chance.

"Let's not beat about the bush — here, club football is considered more important than the national team, and let's recognise that the England manager, whoever he is, will have to do the job with one arm tied behind his back.

"I've probably done as much as anyone could possibly do to bring to people's attention the problems that we are going to have to address in the international scene.

"Don't let's kid ourselves. Let's do something, and let's see if we can give the next England manager more of a fighting chance than I or my predecessors had.

"Some things that go with the job are less than pleasant — they always have been, and I can't see that changing."

Taylor, who says he will back any candidate the FA decides to appoint, admitted: "I don't know any reasons from a footballing point of view why Terry Venables should not get the job."

Taylor says that after a holiday in Mauritius following his resignation, he is keen to get back into soccer, but is happy to bide his time, even though he has already received three or four offers to run coaching courses abroad.

But with time to reflect on his much-criticised reign, he still offered a stout defence, insisting he would still not pick Chris Waddle in the squad if he was in charge today.

And what about the universal verdict that his term of office was a failure? "Was it a failure with a small F or a capital F, I don't really know — let other people be the judge of that. I'm looking to the future...."

In the hot seat: Terry Venables must revive England.

"Dixie", "Fatty", and "Psycho"

What's in a name?

Every football club has one and so do most footballers — but football club managers simply will not answer to them.

Nicknames are tossed around club dressing rooms as frequently as the liniment, the shirts and the muddy socks.

Players compete with each other to invent the most appropriate nickname when a new colleague first walks through the dressing room door. But nicknames are out as soon as a senior player swaps his dressing room peg for a coathanger, a polished desk and a management contract.

This week new manager John Deehan will start fining Norwich City players unless they call him "Boss" or "Gaffer". Continued use of his nickname "Dixie" is strictly taboo now former coach Deehan has exchanged tracksuit for collar, tie and suit.

Why Dixie? Well, former striker Deehan's surname was just perfect to couple with the label carried by the greatest English goalscorer of all time.

Dixie Dean, born in Birkenhead in 1907, was christened William Ralph and there are several theories about the origin of his nickname. Perhaps the most plausible is that his jet-black curly hair and dark skin conjured up pictures of the American deep south.

Whatever the reason, Dean hated it. Nickname or not, defenders always had good cause to remember him — Dean had already netted 27 goals in 27 matches for Tranmere Rovers between September 1924 and March 1925 when Everton set the football world buzzing by paying an incredible 3,000 pounds for the 18-year-old.

Goals flowed: 100 league goals before the age of 21, 200 league goals in 199 games by the age of 23, 300 league goals in 310 games, a record 353 league goals in just over 12 seasons, 37 career hat-tricks, a grand total 473 goals in 502 matches, 18 in 16 England appearances, another 18 in 16 Merseyside league derbies and 60 First Division goals in 1927-28 — a one-season record that will surely stand for ever.

Charlie Fleming couldn't match Dean's scoring feats but his nickname was just as memorable.

Fleming, born in Blairhall, Scotland, during Dean's 60-goal season, became known as "Cannonball" becuase of the ferocity of his shooting.

"Cannonball" Fleming left East Fife in 1955 for Sunderland, where he scored 62 goals in 107 league games and a single international.

Before the turn of the century Sheffield United included two players who were best known by their nicknames. Nudger and Fatty were stars of a team which reached three FA Cup finals, won a league championship and twice finished runners-up.

Both played in the 1899 FA Cup winning side, Ernest "Nudger" Needham at left half and William "Fatty" Foulke in goal.

England defender Needham, a Blade for 22 years, earned his nickname through his habit of nudging the ball away to a teammate in crisp tackles. Needham, also known as "the prince of half backs", was one of the few players to have two nicknames.

Foulke, a 19th century Mr Blobby, would have made Paul Gascoigne look like Twiggy. He weighed around 15 stone (95kg) when he joined Sheffield United in 1894 and tipped (or broke) the scales at around 20 stone (127kg) when he turned out for Chelsea and Bradford City more than a decade later.

Said to be remarkably agile for his bulk, Fatty also played for England.

Sometimes nicknames are applied as a matter of necessity. When Charlton Athletic signed South African-born Albert George Uytenbogaardt in 1948 no-one at The Valley could pronounce his surname, so he inevitably became "Humphrey".

But the goalkeeper made only six league appearances in six years for Charlton and let in eight goals against Blackpoool before leaving to take a printing job in Cape Town.

England teams of the 1950s sometimes featured a wizard, a lion and a plumber — "the wizard of dribble" Stanley Matthews, "the Lion of Vienna" Nat Lofthouse and "the Preston plumber" Tom Finney.

Sunderland's Len Shackleton was christened "the clown prince" for outrageous antics like sitting on the ball during a game.

The 1970s featured a glut of uncompromising defenders like Norman "bites yer legs" Hunter and Chelsea's Ron "chopper" Harris.

Jack "the giraffe" Charlton followed John "gentle giant" Charles at Leeds.

England captain Stuart Pearce and Millwall's Pat van den Hauwe are both labelled "psycho" but no-one calls Terry Venables "El Tel", a convenient abbreviation for newspaper headline writers.

Any award for wit and originality in a new nickname would surely go to the Norwich City players. Wales international midfielder Jeremy Goss was the answer to their goalscoring prayers so they tagged him "God".

One top goalkeeper is even known by his dressing room colleagues as Dracula because he fears crosses.

"Champagne Charlie" Nicholas of Glasgow Celtic.

"King Cole" of Newcastle United.

Somalia's protected Stadium

BY JULIAN BEDFORD OF AAP

Somalia's national stadium is the most intimidating in the world; it is, at present, a fortified camp for a battalion of Pakistani troops and their tanks.

But with the return of relative calm after three years of inter-clan war which wrecked Somalia, soccer is at the forefront of attempts by Somalis to breathe life back into sports, despite appalling communications and a lack of venues.

"Sport is synonymous with civilisation, not war," said Farah Addo "Sindiko", vice-president of the Somali Olympic Committee formed six months ago to put sport back into this broken Horn of African country.

It has had only limited success so far. In a country where peace remains fragile and face-to-face communication is the only way to get a message across, organising anything takes time.

Though never a major sporting nation, Somalia produced an outstanding athlete in Abdi Bile, 1,500 metres gold medallist at the Rome World Championships in 1987 and a bronze medallist in last year's World Championships in Stuttgart.

Bile, however, was awarded a sports scholarship and for most of his career has been based in the United States. Those sportsmen who had to stay in their country were less fortunate.

Foremost among them are footballers. As in most of Africa, soccer was the most popular sport in Somalia before the war.

Until 1990 Somalia boasted a First Division of 10 teams and a major regional cup and competed on the African stage in both club and national competitions.

The top players who graced the pitch at the national stadium have been swept away and are impossible to track down three years since the start of civil war ended their careers.

But they are being replaced by a new generation of young Somalis seeing their first chance of playing organised soccer.

Special matches have been staged on Somali Flag Day, Teacher's Day and Police Day. Mogadishu's Banadir team made a four-day tour in November of Hiran and Middle Shabele regions in central Somalia, the first such tour since the civil war.

"That is one of our major achievements," said Sindiko, whose first allegiance is to soccer, the sport he played and now administers as president of the Somalia Football Federationa and a member of the Confederation of African Football.

"About 70 per cent of our activities have been in football," he added. "Since football is the mother of all sports that is what the people have asked for. They want games organised and we are trying.

"There are proposals to start organising in both districts and regions where it is viable. In 1994, we hope to be able to stage the regional cup for the first time in four years.

"Then we can start again with club competitions. Clubs rely on financial support and that can only come when there is peace."

He said they were planning to form a team to take part in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics and African competitions.

Though Somalia is a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Sindiko complained it had not received the financial support the organisation gives to the poorer nations.

He said he would like to see more help for sports from the multinational United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM), which has volleyball courts in its compounds in Mogadishu.

"We've had some help from the Americans and Italians but UNOSOM never gave us anything," he said. "The only thing they gave us is security. They did not help us financially or materially.

"If UNOSOM wants to help Somalia, they should investigate sport more deeply. It could bring the youth together."

UNOSOM, however, has no intention of backing sporting acitivites although spokesman George Bennett said individual members of the 26-nation UN coalition were free to help.

Sindiko does, however, praise UNOSOM for something tangible — the Pakistani presence backed by tanks in the national stadium.

"At least they are keeping it safe from destruction. And when they go it will be safe for us to play there once again."

Italy courts the thinking man's manager

Serie A giants are vying for master tactician Zdenek Zeman

NOT many managers in Italian football history, least of all those from overseas, could claim to have been simultaneously courted by four of the biggest clubs in Serie A.

But that is precisely what is happening to Zdenek Zeman, the 45-year-old master tactician from Prague who took Foggia out of Second Division anonymity and over the last two-and-a-half seasons has fashioned everybody's relegation favourites into one of the most attractive and respected sides in the country.

Zdenek Zeman

Inter Milan, AC Milan, Lazio and Roma are all suddenly on the trail of the normally withdrawn Zeman. Foggia president Pasquale Casillo has given up trying to keep the suitors at bay. He has announced that the Czech will be free to leave the small club from Puglia at the end of the season.

It will be a sad farewell for Zeman, one of that rare breed of managers who join unfashionable clubs, sell their best players to balance the books, but somehow manage to come up with untapped talent to replace them.

Zeman sold Beppe Signori, Ciccio Baiano and Igor Shalimov at the end of Foggia's first season in the top flight when the big clubs swooped on the division's brightest newcomers. He simply waved goodbye to the stars he had created and invented another team while spending only a pittance.

Such dramatic success in unpromising circumstances has not gone unnoticed, and now Zeman is set to reap the rewards as the big clubs queue up for his services. Yet Zeman only ended up in Italy by accident after a family holiday in 1966 that took on a sporting significance. Zeman explains: "I went to Palermo to spend the summer holidays with my uncle Cestmir Vjcpalek, who actually went on some years later to coach Juventus.

"I returned to Italy three times, and in 1969 I decided to stay for good. Prague still meant a lot to me, but I had fallen in love with the sun, sea and way of life there."

He immediately set out to seduce the Italian football world with the theories he was developing while training to be a coach. "I believed that in all sports, and especially football, speed of execution was becoming more crucial," Zeman said. "Football is above all a sport of movement and flux, and I thought that the key thing was to exploit quickness of thought and action as much as possible."

Star purchase: Zeman brought Igor Shalimov to Foggia.

After a few false starts with, ironically, Foggia, then Parma and Messina, Zeman's ideas reached fruition during his second spell at Foggia in 1986. Using a zone defence system and an aggressive pressing game, Foggia became known for the speed of their one-touch play. In Serie A they frequently outplayed more glamorous teams.

After a recent 4-1 victory against Dino Zoff's Lazio, Zoff admitted that the Foggia team had "made us suffer terribly with the pace and rhythm of their play." Lazio president Sergio Cragnotti simply said: "Zeman's team didn't let us breathe from the first moment to the last."

Such a performance was achieved by one of the cheapest sides in top-class Italian football. The Lazio team that was crushed 4-1 cost over five times as much as their opponents. Foggia's only major signing this season was Antonio Chamot from Pisa who cost just under $2.3 million. The most expensive on their books is Brian Roy at $3.2 million.

Casillo has revealed that Zeman asked him never to pay more than $3 million for a player because "no player in the world should cost that kind of money." An unusual request from a manager to his president in the world's most inflationary league.

Yet it is an attitude that fits in with Zeman's football philosophy. "Football is a game that should be dominated by the idea of the collective," he explains. "The talents of the individual should always be at the service of the team, not the other way round." Zeman's vision of the game is an egalitarian one. Speed and teamwork are at its heart. Not individualism.

That is why some commentators believe the Czech is more at home at a provincial club like Foggia, rather than at one of the big names. If and when he goes to one of the big four next season, will he be able to deal with the stars and prima donnas who may not be as willing as the lesser-known Foggia players to knuckle down in the interests of the team?

Zeman doesn't see a problem. "The players I discovered at Foggia became stars. Signori, Balano, Petrescu, Kolyvanov, Shalimov, Chamot and Roy are players who will play for their countries in the next World Cup. So who says I can't coach the big names? All the same, I know that the biggest test of my career is just around the corner."

BARRICHELLO EQUALS SENNA'S BEST

*Impressive testing debut for the new Jordan-Hart 194

YOUNG Brazilian driver Rubens Barrichello concluded a successful test in Portugal for the Sasol Jordan team by equalling the performance of three-times World Champion Ayrton Senna. Barrichello put in a best lap of 1'12.49 in the new Jordan-Hart 194 — exactly the same as Senna's quickest time around the Estoril Circuit in the Williams-Renault, set last weekend.

Barrichello's achievement comes hot on the heels of an impressive performance earlier in the test by teammate Eddie Irvine. Irvine described the car as "awesome" after completing his three-day stint behind the wheel on Sunday of last week. "It feels fantastic" he said, "particularly in the fast corners". Eddie put in a best lap of 1'12.97, which would have put him fifth on the grid for the start of last year's Grand Prix, before handing the car over to Rubens. "I left the circuit feeling very encouraged about our performance, and very excited about the year ahead," said Eddie.

That feeling was echoed by Rubens. "From the very first moment that I sat in this car, I knew it was good," he said. "The time that I did today is just proof of that. Last year with our old car we were doing 15.4's around this track" he continued, "and at the time we were quite happy with that performance. Now we are doing 12.4's — three seconds quicker — so you can imagine how I feel!"

"The car looks pretty good," admitted Chief Engineer Gary Anderson. "This was our first test and when we've had more opportunity to learn about the car I'm sure there will be more to come. My initial reactions are very favourable though," Anderson continued. "The car is very easy on tyres and in general it looks like quite a good package," he concluded.

Brian Hart, the man who designed and built the V10 engine which powers the Jordan cars, was also pleased with the results of the test. "To be honest it has gone slightly better than I expected," he said. "We were running the new 1994 specification engine and, though there are one or two areas which we have to look at, on the whole things are coming along well."

For further information please contact Louise Goodman at Jordan Grand Prix Tel: 44 327 8571532 Fax: 44 327 858120.

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WORLD BRIEFS...

ROMA RAMPAGE

Riot police fired tear-gas canisters and charged about 200 fans who went on a rampage outside AS Roma's training camp last week after the team's sixth defeat this season.

Policemen moved in to disperse the fans when they began hurling eggs, vegetables, fish and buckets over the fence of Trigoria training camp, where Roma players had just completed a warm-up.

According to initial reports no-one was injured. Several people were taken into custody for resisting arrest.

Roma players, including Argentine striker Abel Balbo and German midfielder Thomas Hassler, had reached the dressing rooms when the fans started the rampage, club sources said.

Fans gathered in Trigoria, on the outskirts of the city, for a "peaceful" demonstration against team officials considered responsible for Roma's disappointing record.

IVIC'S FIFA JOB

Croat coach Tomislav Ivic is leaving Portuguese champions Porto to become a FIFA trainer, club chairman Jorge Nuno Pinto da Costa revealed last week.

Pinto da Costa declined to name his replacement, despite growing speculation that it may be former England manager Bobby Robson, who was sacked by Sporting Lisbon in December.

"We have two options and one of them has already worked as a coach in Portugal. The only thing I can tell you is that the new trainer will not be Portuguese," Pinto da Costa told a news conference in the northern city of Oporto. Robson, who recently turned down an offer to manage Wales's national team, was unavailable for comment. He said in a recent interview he would consider taking a new job in Portugal.

Ivic, in his second spell as Porto coach this season, said he had been offered the chance to represent Croatia as an International Football Federation (FIFA) trainer by his country's national soccer association.

Pinto da Costa said Ivic, who guided Porto to victory in the Intercontinental Cup and European Super Cup in 1987, was leaving Porto for the second time on friendly terms and would remain a club adviser.

But Ivic has been criticised by Porto fans lately for his constant changes to his line-up.

ROBSON'S WEEK OFF

Manchester United's Bryan Robson entered hospital last Wednesday for an operation on his sinuses which have kept him out of action for a week.

The former England captain has been plagued by the problem all season, particularly after flying to European Cup matches. He had two small operations earlier in the season, but they failed to clear it.

UNITED SHAME

Leeds United has launched a hunt for the yobs who insulted the memory of the late Sir Matt Busby before last weekend's loss at Blackburn.

Videos and newspaper photographs are being scrutinised by Leeds officials in the hope of identifying fans who chanted "There's only one Don Revie" during the minute's silence for Sir Matt before the game.

The club's executive board may either reintroduce a ban on away ticket sales to their fans, which was lifted four years ago, or confiscate season tickets from those who misbehaved at Blackburn.

Leeds chairman Leslie Silver said: "This sort of thing has to be stamped out. It was disgraceful, especially when you consider Don Revie actually learned his trade from Matt Busby.

"For Leeds fans to act in that manner was an absolute insult to Don Revie and the Busby family. We thought we'd made huge progress, but in one minute these lunatics have put our cause back five years."

Swindon has already banned one fan who swore during the minute's silence before last Saturday's game with Tottenham. Secretary Jon Pollard said: "He found it quite amusing when he was ejected by the police. Let's see if he's laughing quite so much now."

Meanwhile, Chelsea may also take action against fans who jeered Aston Villa midfielder Andy Townsend during their Busby tribute last Saturday. They are also studying a video to try to identify those involved.

VAN BASTEN'S UNCLEAR FUTURE

Marco Van Basten, whose career is threatened by a chronic ankle injury, said he faced a crucial test this week which would determine his future — if he has one.

The 29-year-old Dutch striker said his future hung on a meeting with his Belgian specialist Marc Martens at the end of February. "By then I will have rested for three months, as I was asked to do," he said. "We will decide then on the program to follow and what should be done about the injury. I'm not afraid about the ankle but, of course, I have my doubts."

Evans and Thomson want Anfield job

PHIL Thompson and Roy Evans, joint favourites to succeed Graeme Souness as Liverpool manager, would both welcome the chance to restore the fallen English giant to its former glories.

Evans is already at Anfield, having been assistant to Souness since last May, while Thompson was sacked as coach by the Scot a year ago and paid $60,000 by the club to drop a claim of unfair dismissal.

"It's a challenge you would have to think about if offered, but we'll have to wait and see what the men upstairs decide," said Evans, who has been on Liverpool's backroom staff for 20 years.

"I hadn't thought about it until I heard Graeme had resigned, but right now it's all speculation."

Thompson, the former England defender, backed Evans for the post, although he admitted he would also like to follow Souness, who quit last week.

"I would love to be involved in bringing Liverpool back to its former glories, but I don't know," he said. "The people who matter are the people upstairs.

"Roy is a good bet. He knows the way things are and what people believe in, which is very important. He's also got great knowledge.

"It's no use bringing in someone from outside again. He might change things again and fail again.

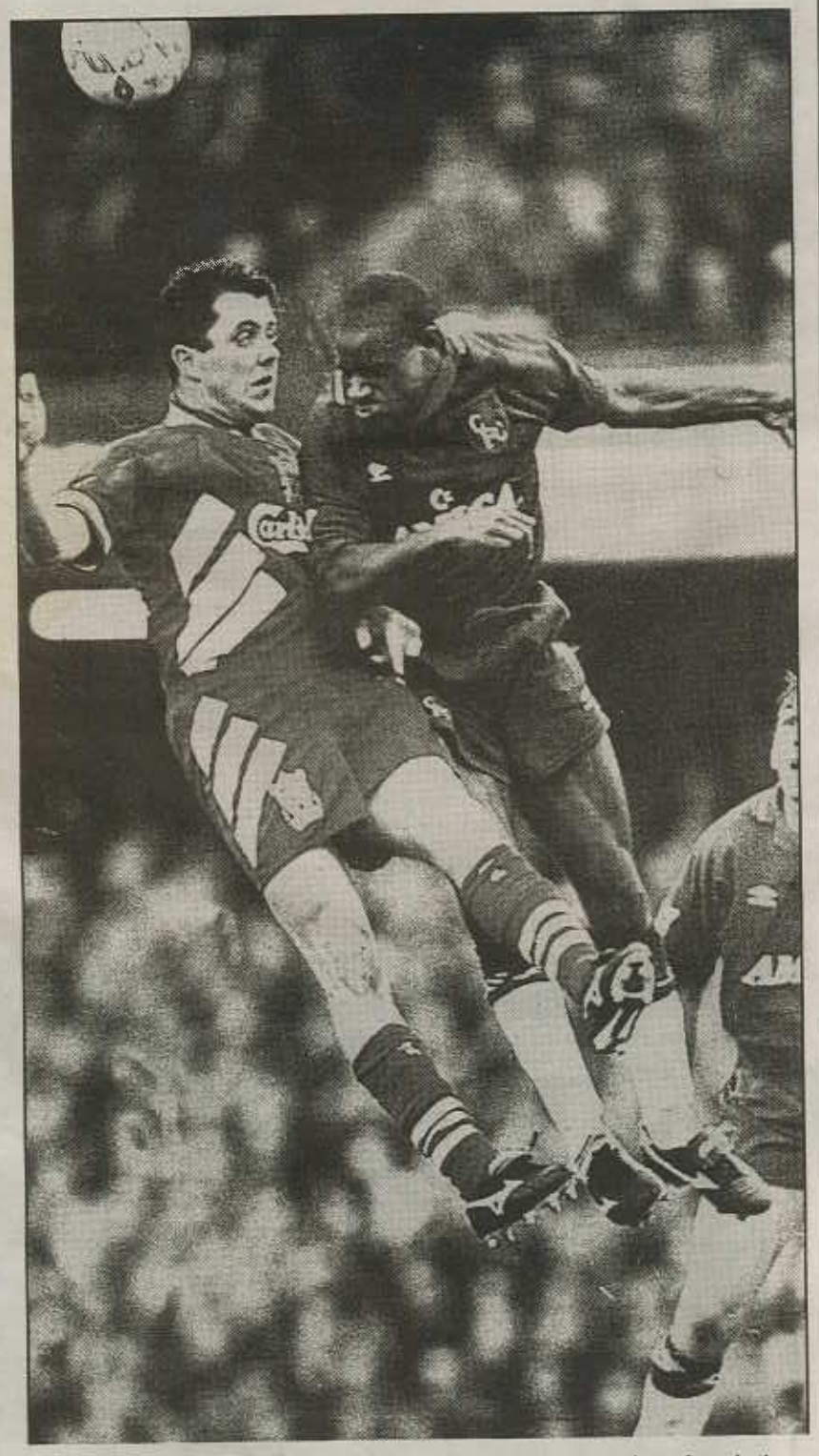
"The big problem is that the club has suffered. They're in the headlines again for all the wrong reasons. They've got to try and get back to the way things were, of keeping everything in-house."

Liverpool may also make a new bid to prise former centre back Alan Hansen from his television pundit's chair with the BBC.

The former Scotland defender was the man Liverpool wanted when Kenny Dalglish shocked the English Premiership club by walking out three years ago, but was reluctant to become involved in high-profile club management then.

However, just as Dalglish has since taken the road back into management with Blackburn, Hansen may also be unable to resist the lure of a top challenge in the game if Liverpool can put together a deal that appeals to him.

Chairman David Moores gave a clue to the theory that Liverpool already has a big name in mind for the permanent job when he said: "We intend to resolve this matter quickly and announce a successor very shortly."



Following Souness?: The Anfield future of brutish Julian Dicks, hardly a player in the Liverpool tradition, is in doubt now that his mentor has left the club.

WORLD BRIEFS...

YORATH SNUBBED

Terry Yorath's hopes of being re-appointed manager of Wales were dashed last week.

The Football Association of Wales postponed meetings of the international and finance committees after chief executive Alun Evans suffered a migraine attack and was unable to attend, then stunned Yorath by announcing the appointment of John Toshack.

FANS BANNED

Newcastle United are under fire over their decision to exclude visiting supporters for the rest of the English Premier League season because of development at the Gallowgate end of St James's Park.

Luton supporters must be allocated tickets for Saturday's FA Cup fourth-round tie under current regulations.

But Chelsea have protested to the Premier League over a ban which will prevent their fans attending the match scheduled for April 4.

"We believe clubs have a duty to give visiting clubs some tickets even during building work," said Chelsea chief executive Colin Hutchinson.

COX SAYS NO

Aston Villa's England Under 21 defender Neil Cox has rejected a "double your money" two-year extension to his current contract.

Cox, who still has 18 months of his current deal to run, said: "I don't want to leave Aston Villa but feel I'm worth more than I have been offered."

Earlier this season, Cox put in a transfer request after being dropped.

NEW COACH FOR KIWIS

Newly appointed New Zealand coach Bobby Clark gained the position after an impressive European candidate declined it because of a below-par salary package, the New Zealand Football Association said.

Chairman Harry Dods said considerable interest in the position was shown by applicants from Germany, Denmark and other European countries.

"Some of the applicants from those countries were ruled out because of what they were expecting in terms of salary. Some were just after the money," Dods said.

"We are still relatively amateur and can't afford to pay huge salaries. It's also a lifestyle thing."

Based at Dartmouth College in the United States as coach for the past nine years, Clark has a four-year appointment in New Zealand.

His role as coach of the All Whites will cover all player development, and he will oversee the women's and indoor campaigns.

EURO DRAW

The eight group winners and the six best runners-up will join host England in the finals. The last place will be decided in a play-off, on a neutral ground, between the two runners-up with the poorest records.

FINE

Paul McGrath's walk-out from Aston Villa before their third-round FA Cup tie at Exeter cost the Republic of Ireland defender around $20,000 in club fines.

ANGELL

Brett Angell, the Southend striker, after having a $1m transfer to Portsmouth fall through in midweek, joined Everton on loan in time for the Premiership side's 6-2 win over Swindon.

Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager, has sold his midfield playing son, Darren, to Wolverhampton for an initial $500,000 fee.

HUTCHISON QUITS AT 46

Tommy Hutchison, the former Scotland international, has ended his playing career, at 46 years of age. Hutchison, assistant manager at Merthyr Tydfil, played his last full game against Swansea in the Welsh Cup, 28 years after his debut for Alloa. In a career which included spells at Blackpool, Coventry and Manchester City, he made 861 League appearances.

NUMBERS DON'T ADD UP

Premiership clubs could revert to traditional 1 to 11 shirt numbering next season. The unpopular squad numbering system — at least one club's players wear No 34, 35 and 36 — is in its first season and is to be reviewed at the next meeting of Premier League clubs

WORLD BRIEFS...

GAZZA TROUBLE

English star Paul Gascoigne has run into more trouble with the Italian media.

Gazza, who's played for Italian club Lazio since 1992, ended up in a police station after allegedly hitting a press photographer who snapped him as he emerged from a store with a female companion.

Police released the 26-year-old midfielder without charge 30 minutes later.

The photographer, Lino Nanni, says he'll consult his lawyer about whether to press assault charges.

Gascoigne caused a storm in Italy a year ago when he belched into an interviewer's microphone when asked for a reaction to being left out of a match.

FIFA'S NEW AWARD

The team playing the most entertaining at next summer's 1994 World Cup finals in the United States will get a newly-created award, FIFA, the sport's governing body said.

FIFA cited the example of Cameroon, which "thrilled the crowds with spectacular football" at the 1990 championship before being eliminated in the quarter-finals.

The citation, tentatively called the Entertainment Award, is one of several official prizes to be presented at the 24-nation championship, FIFA's monthly bulletin said. No prize money was mentioned.

MARSEILLE DECISION SOON

FIFA is putting new pressure on France to take a final decision on the Valenciennes-Marseille bribery scandal.

FIFA general secretary Sepp Blatter said he would meet interim French Football Federation (FFF) president Jacques Georges in Colmar, France, and tell him a timetable had to be set for the matter to be resolved.

FIFA and the European Football Union (UEFA) banned Marseille from this season's European Cup after it lost patience with the French federation's failure to take action.

After being threatened with suspension from FIFA, France eventually stripped Marseille of last season's league title and banned the players involved indefinitely, but said the decisions were provisional only and depended on a future verdict in court.

A Marseille player has admitted offering bribes to three Valenciennes players and handing over money to one of the players' wives to lose a vital league match last May.

FAREWELL SIR MATT

Manchester United players led mourners at the funeral of Sir Matt Busby last Thursday, while hundreds of fans stood in rain outside the church and lined the route to the club's Old Trafford home.

Bobby Charlton, George Best, Denis Law and Tommy Docherty were among those paying tribute to the man who led United to five league titles, two English FA Cups and the European Cup.

Sir Matt, who died last week aged 84, rescued Manchester United from the debt and devastation of World War Two in 1948 and made it one of England's most famous and successful clubs.

He survived a 1958 air crash in Munich that wiped out eight of his young "Busby Babes" team and took United to its first European Cup victory 10 years later.

Some 600 people, including the present United squad, packed the Catholic church in Manchester where Sir Matt worshipped for a funeral mass while hundreds of others listened outside.

Bishop Patrick Kelly spoke of Sir Matt's "extraordinary charm, modesty and gentleness".

"From the terror of a snow-swept runway in Munich, he inspired, healed, encouraged and challenged again until the Cup was won," said Kelly.

Fans lined the five kilometre route to the Old Trafford stadium where thousands more had gathered near a carpet of red and white flowers, scarves and mementoes.

One message read: "Thanks for the memories." Another said "Time to manage the Babes again."

UEFA REPLACES REFEREE

UEFA have taken the unusual step of replacing Dutch referee John Blankenstein for next month's European Super Cup second leg match between AC Milan and Parma. Swiss official Kurt Roethlisberger has been named as the replacement.

The decision centres on eight Parma players who have yellow cards — another yellow card for any of them would mean suspension from the first leg of the club's crucial Cup Winners' Cup quarter-final against Dutch club Ajax. UEFA decided that given the circumstances, a Dutch referee for the Super Cup would be inappropriate.

Zico snubbed by Brazilian experts

BY MARIO ETCHART

THE BRAZILIAN "DREAM TEAM"

MORE than 46 Brazilian specialists made possible the almost impossible, to name the best Brazilian 11 of all times.

According to the country's most respected journalists the best Brazilian team of all times is the following:

Goalkeeper: Gilmar.
Defenders: Carlos Alberto, Luis Pereira, Domingos Da Guia and Nilton Santos.
Midfielders: Zito, Didi, Zizinho and Pele.
Strikers: Garrincha and Leonidas Da Silva.
Coach: Tele Santana.

The specialists left behind some illustrous names. Among others: Zico (considered by Pele as his successor), Rivelino, Tostao, Gerson, Falcao, Romario and Socrates.

Pele, the "Athlete of the century" received 45 votes, three more than Garrincha. Next to the two geniuses was Nilton Santos, twice World champion with Brazil, in 1958 and 1962, with 40, followed by goalkeeper Gilmar with 27.

For the new Brazilian generation the names of Zito, Zizinho or Leonidas Da Silva don't mean much. However, the names of Pele, Garrincha and Didi are considered by the fans as genuine national heroes.

Gilmar was the goalkeeper in two Brazilian World Champion teams, the 1958 and the 1962 one, while defender Carlos Alberto was the captain of the 1970 Brazilian winning squad in Mexico.

Midfielder Zito was a member of the 1958 and 1962 World Champions while Zizinho played in the 1950 Brazilian 11 that lost the final against Uruguay in Maracana.

Only five of the current Brazilian players were mentioned in the list. Romario received two votes while Jorginho, Cafu, Careca and Ricardo Rocha obtained only one each.

BRAZIL, COLOMBIA AND MEXICO THE FAVOURITES

The national teams of Brazil, Colombia and Mexico could be among the favourites to win the 1994 World Cup in the United States, according to the great Pele.

The former soccer star believes that during the competition there could be some surprises and some unexpected results.

"This year the groups are more balanced and all the matches' results will be difficult to predict, but I support Brazil because it is in my heart.

"Colombia and Mexico are the better organised teams from Latin America and Argentina must improve and overcome its critical situation. But in today's football anything can happen. Nevertheless, I still believe in the Latin American teams because they are the best in the world," said Pele.

Pele added that Juventus star Roberto Baggio, Barcelona's striker Romario, and La Coruna's prolific scorer Bebeto, will be some of the stars of the 1994 World Cup.

About Maradona's chances, Pele said that the Argentine star won't be physically ready for such demanding competition.

IN BRIEF

Chilean club Union Espanola qualified for the 1994 Copa Libertadores after its 1-0 victory over Deportes Temuco. The other Chilean team in the major South American competition at club level is Colo Colo...Former Argentine player Eduardo Lujan Manera is the new coach of Uruguayan big gun, Nacional of Montevideo. Manera replaced former tactician Osvaldo Piazza at the helm of the second most popular club in the country...Vicente Cantatore will be Colo Colo's coach for the 1994 season. Cantatore was, until last month, the coach of Argentine club Rosario Central and will replace Mirko Josic, the Croatian coach who will be in charge of the Chilean national team...Mexico and Bulgaria drew 1-1 in a friendly international played in San Diego, USA...Also in San Diego, Costa Rica and Norway played out a 0-0 draw in another friendly international...The Argentine Under 23 national team defeated Peru, 3-2, in a friendly international played in Mar Del Plata, 412 kilometres south of Buenos Aires. The return match will be held at Lima's National Stadium today...Argentine coach, Salvador Capitano renewed his contract with Ecuadorean champion

Not good enough: Zico failed to make Brazil's best-ever team.

WORLD BRIEFS...

VENABLES' PLEDGE TO GAZZA

Troubled Lazio playmaker Paul Gascoigne received a promise of help from new England coach Terry Venables as he bids to get his career back on track after his latest public outburst.

But Venables, who was idolised by "Gazza" during their time together at Spurs, hopes the renewal of their close friendship on the international scene can once again bring the very best out of the wayward Geordie.

"I'm looking forward to working with him again and if he has any problems I can help him with, I will," the England coach said.

"I don't know how much I can do, because it's his club which will have a bigger influence on him than me. They're with him more often. But I'll be seeing what I can do to help in that direction.

"You have to live it to understand what Gazza's up against. He's in a goldfish bowl more than you can believe. Some people can handle it better than others, but it's difficult for him."

When he does fly to Rome, Venables, who was under similar pressure to "Gazza" when boss of Barcelona, does not intend to start throwing his weight around with Lazio over Gascoigne.

"It's all very well me popping over there for a couple of days, but he has to live there and I wouldn't want to leave him with any problems," he explained.

BRAZIL BAN DIRECTOR

The director at the centre of Brazilian soccer's match-fixing scandal has been banned for one year following the conclusion of the first of three investigations into the affair.

Wagner Canazaro, the former refereeing director of the Rio de Janeiro soccer federation, was banned following allegations made against him, firstly by three anonymous referees to a Brazilian newspaper and then by referee Claudio Cerdeira.

All said Canazaro had told them that referees would be responsible for ensuring results of certain matches in the 1994 Rio de Janeiro soccer championship went "according to the federation's interests."

The ban was imposed by a tribunal of the Rio de Janeiro federation, after finding Canazaro guilty of attempting to influence results.

Canazaro, who was sacked shortly after the allegations were first made in December, has denied the claims, saying there had been "an error of interpretation". He said he would appeal against the ban.

The scandal looks set to drag on with two police inquiries currently under way and more serious allegations being investigated.

Rio police are holding their own inquiry and have already heard claims from ex-referee Reginaldo Mathias that match-fixing has been common in the Rio de Janeiro championship since 1985.

Brazilian federal police launched a separate investigation because some of the matches involved may have featured in a government-run lottery.

The Rio de Janeiro championship itself begins this Sunday.

Three of Rio's leading clubs — Botafogo, Fluminense and Flamengo — had originally refused to take part and attempted to form a breakaway league.

It took days of negotiations led by the Brazilian Football Confederation to get them to back down.

JAPANESE BAGGIO

Roberto Baggio wants to end his playing career in Japan.

The recently crowned European Footballer of the Year says he is 'fascinated by the way of life there, their people and their religion.'

The Italian idol, who is leading Juventus' chase in pursuit of League leaders Milan, is a Buddhist but Juve fans will be praying he won't be heading East for a while yet.

ZOFF OFF

Dino Zoff's days as manager of Lazio look numbered.

The former national team 'keeper, who won a World Cup winners' medal with Italy in 1982, is having a torrid time this season as the Rome club struggle to stay with the leading teams in the battle for the Championship.

And the man tipped to take over as manager is Foggia's much-in-demand Zdenek Zeman.

The Czech coach is highly rated in Italy and his side's recent 4-1 win over Lazio could prove to be the beginning of the end for Zoff.

DARKO HEADS FOR GERMANY

Darko Pancev looks set to join German strugglers Leipzig for the rest of the season.

The former Red Star Belgrade striker, who joined Inter for $5 million in 1991, has endured a nightmare time at the San Siro.

He scored only once in his 12 games last season and hasn't played at all this term.

The fall of Real and Atletico

It's crisis time for Madrid's elite clubs

How Madrid's mighty have fallen. A city that for decades has lived and breathed football for one or other of its two illustrious teams is coming painfully to terms with the reality of the modern game.

Real and Atletico Madrid, who have jointly disputed 17 European finals, are so deep in crisis that their presence in next season's continental competitions is in doubt.

The recent clash between the two rivals in the sixth round of the Spanish Cup earlier this month was one of the most eagerly awaited Madrid derbies. Not because victory was so sweet but because the prospect of defeat was even more appalling than ever.

Licking the deep moral wounds of the 5-0 humiliation in Barcelona five days earlier, Real's president Ramon Mendoza had already called a press conference for the morning after the Cup clash. The coach Benito Floro would be sacked, predicted the pundits and Mendoza would announce his own resignation. Over at the Manzanares, Atletico's president Jesus Gill was aghast at the financial repercussions of elimination in a season when an unexpected UEFA Cup exit against OFI Crete had already opened a yawning gap between budget and reality.

"If we lose to Real," he announced, "there will probably be problems with pay cheques at the end of the month." They lost 2-3 and the players now wait and see whether the inconsistent Gill keeps his word.

There was relief, however partial, at Real. Mendoza promptly used his press conference to adopt a "crisis, what crisis?" approach. Floro, he said, would continue and his own position would be reconsidered at the end of the season.

What he didn't deny was that all was far from well. Top priority, he insisted, was negotiating a $245 million bank loan which had been aborted by the crisis at Banesto. Although Real have hung a "business as usual" notice on the door, there is massive unrest in the back room.

Club employees are dismayed at the cutbacks proposed by new executive director Inocencio Arias, and the players are unhappy about reduced salaries and bonuses in prospect for next season.

Real's five consecutive league titles, a run abruptly halted by Barcelona in 1991, provoked a deluge of offers from Italian clubs and Mendoza felt obliged to repel aggressors with Italian-style wages. Half a dozen players earn over $1.3 million per season plus bonuses, and skipper Manolo Sanchis tops the wage bill with a contract worth $2.5 million.

Atletico's problems are equally acute. They followed up their Cup defeat with a goalless home draw against bottom club Lleida and a 2-1 defeat by modest Rayo Vallecano. That left them 12th with the additional honour of being the only team not to have won an away game all season. Ironically, it was their manager, Emilio Cruz, and not Floro who resigned, the 22nd at Atletico to part company with Gil in just six-and-a-half seasons, after just one win in ten games.

One of the crosses borne by both Madrid clubs is that their foreign signings have failed to produce dividends on investment. Croatian midfielder Robert Prosinecki and Slovakian striker Peter Dubovsky are struggling to hold first-team places at Real, while Atletico have offloaded the Brazillians Tilico and Moacir.

Gil threw up his arms in despair. "So many trains have passed through this station that there aren't many I can catch," he said.

As at Real, however, the bottom line is financial. Atletico closed last season with just over $1 million still owed to the players.

Gil now admits that he wants a wage structure based on productivity in terms of results. "If we fail to qualify for the UEFA Cup ," he threatened, "I expect the players to accept their fair share of the financial consequences for the club."

Spectacular flop: Robert Prosinecki is just one of many signings made by Real and Atletico who have failed to repay the money spent on them.

Venables: England's saviour?

Baggio scores his 12th for Juve

Laudrup's Barce still winning

FA Cup fifth round draw